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Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1770 (2007)

I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 6 of resolution 1770 (2007), adopted on 10 August 2007, the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council on a quarterly basis on the fulfilment of the responsibilities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The present report is the second submitted pursuant to that resolution.

2. The report provides an update on United Nations activities in Iraq since the last report (S/2007/608), dated 15 October 2007, with a continued focus on initial steps taken to implement resolution 1770 (2007). It presents a summary of key political developments during the period under review, including activities pertaining to the implementation of article 140 of the Iraqi Constitution, as well as regional and international events concerning Iraq. The report provides an update on the activities of my Special Representative for Iraq and on operational and security matters.

II. Summary of key political and security developments in Iraq

3. The Government of Iraq has continued its efforts to move forward on issues related to national security and the administration of Government. However, progress has been slow for a variety of reasons, including the refusal of ministers belonging to the Tawafoq bloc to resume their places in the Cabinet. This has lead to an ongoing impasse, as well as the dismissal of ministers who did not perform their duties.

4. While the routine business of the Council of Representatives proceeded satisfactorily, progress has remained slow on key substantive proposals, notably the draft hydrocarbon package. Similarly, progress on the draft Justice and Accountability Law remains slow, although parliamentary debate on it appears to have narrowed to disagreements on the constitutionality of specific provisions, including the proposed dissolution of the Supreme National Commission for Debaathification and the prosecution of the Baath Party as a collective body. The draft law was presented to Parliament on 26 November and a second reading took place on 6 December. With respect to the draft Law on Governorates not organized

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into a region, the Regions Committee is exploring steps to expedite the third reading of the legislation. As a result, the draft could be brought to a vote in early January.

5. On 24 December President Jalal Talabani, Vice-President Tariq al-Hashemi and Kurdistan President Massoud Barzani signed a memorandum of understanding between the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the Iraqi Islamic Party and the Kurdistan Democratic Party. President Talabani and Vice-President Al-Hashemi have declared that the memorandum of understanding was intended to activate previous agreements, support the political process and encourage the formation of a national unity Government and national reconciliation.

6. On 25 November, Prime Minister Nuri Kamel al-Maliki and United States President George W. Bush signed a Declaration of Principles for a Long-Term Relationship of Cooperation and Friendship between the Republic of Iraq and the United States of America. The Prime Minister had previously indicated that the Government expected that the Security Council would be able to handle the situation in Iraq without action under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. The joint declaration is to be followed by negotiations between the two Governments on their entire bilateral relationship, including the scale and deployment of the multinational force in Iraq, which are expected to be concluded by 31 July 2008.

7. Clashes between competing Shiite militias loyal to the Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council and the Sadrist Trend occurred in Diwaniyah in October, Amarah in November and Basra throughout the last quarter. The serious nature of these clashes triggered some reconciliation efforts. On 6 October, the leader of the Council, Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, and Moqtada al-Sadr signed an agreement to prevent further violence between their supporters and on 4 November established a joint committee to implement it. Moqtada al-Sadr continues to reaffirm the August suspension of activities by the Mahdi Army for a period of six months.

8. On 24 November, a group of Sadrist activists announced the formation of a new group, the Iraq National Gathering, to promote tolerance and dialogue with other groups. Meanwhile, cleric-led initiatives to reduce tensions between Sunnis and Shiites continued. On 27 November, some 200 Islamic scholars participated in the first national forum under the auspices of Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani.

9. "Awakening Councils", or concerned local citizen units continued to be established. As key components of current strategy of the multinational force, these units have been created as a proxy civil defence corps in, to date, predominantly Sunni areas. In Anbar, the Awakening Council was active in combating Al-Qaida violence and appeared to enjoy broad support. The multinational force provides funding, training and organizational support to those units. The Iraqi Government is considering absorbing a fraction of the existing 77,000 members of the concerned local citizen units into the police and army and is planning to establish vocational training centres for others in order to integrate them into the labour market.

10. This process is likely to be a prolonged one. The Government still has serious long-term concerns about the implications of armed, territorial Sunni tribal forces operating in a framework outside its control. Senior leaders from the governing coalition were involved in several outreach initiatives aimed at reducing tension between the Awakening Councils and the Government.

11. Overall violence across Iraq declined steadily throughout the period. From averages of 200 incidents a day in July and August, the level of hostile activity across the nation declined to approximately 90 a day in September, October and November. The deployment of additional multinational force troops earlier in the year is one of the reasons for the reduction in overall violence. Others include the ceasefire declared by Moqtada al-Sadr, the role of the Awakening Councils and increased cooperation between the Government and some regional neighbours on security-related issues.

12. The Mahdi Army ceasefire has been instrumental in reducing the level of violence in Baghdad. Specific types of violence associated with this militia have noticeably declined. Moqtada al-Sadr has reinforced his ceasefire order twice in the last quarter. However, breakaway militia factions continue to target military personnel, from both the multinational force and Iraqi Security Forces, around Baghdad, irrespective of Al-Sadr's ceasefire instruction.

13. Following the withdrawal of British forces from the city of Basra, Basra Province was transferred to provincial Iraqi control on 16 December. However, the ground situation in Basra is still dominated by rivalry among key parties, mainly groups affiliated with Sadrists, the Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council and Fadhila. The Governor of Basra has survived a number of attacks. The newly appointed police commander, sent by the Prime Minister to contain local violence, has also reportedly survived several attempts on his life. Attacks against women in Basra increased in 2007 compared with previous years. The Governorate Council and command elements of the police are in early stages of establishing an effective working relationship. There are indications that the dominant parties and tribal groups in the Province may be prepared to negotiate control of the security environment.

14. On 3 December, Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, a leader of the self-declared Islamic State of Iraq (presumably affiliated with Al-Qaida in Iraq), declared a renewed campaign against military forces and anyone found cooperating with them. In the ensuing days, there was a spike in vehicle-borne and other improvised explosive device attacks against the multinational force and assassination attempts against key Government and leadership figures, which may be associated with this declaration.

15. Recent joint successes of the Iraqi Security Forces, the multinational force and tribal forces in Diyala are pushing extremist elements beyond Kirkuk and Mosul and towards areas under Kurdistan regional government control.

Regional developments pertaining to Iraq

16. On 23 October, the Interior Ministers of neighbouring States of Iraq met in Kuwait for their fourth annual meeting. They agreed broadly on helping to restore stability and security in Iraq, in accordance with previous commitments, and on a regular reporting mechanism. In the wake of the meeting, Saudi Arabia indicated that it was prepared to engage Iraq on the repatriation of Saudi nationals held as terror suspects and to consider reopening additional crossing points along its border with Iraq.

17. Tensions along the border of Iraq and Turkey reached a new level after 17 October, when the Turkish Parliament authorized a cross-border operation against Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) terrorist hideouts in northern Iraq for up to one year. The first targeted strike occurred in December following a gradual

reduction in tension. During the crisis, the leadership of Turkey repeatedly stated that a major incursion was not imminent. Vice-President Al-Hashemi travelled to Turkey, reciprocating a visit from the Turkish Foreign Minister to Baghdad. A high-level Iraqi political and security delegation, including senior officials from the Kurdistan regional government, followed on 25 October and proposed several measures for improving border control. At a conference in Istanbul in November, Prime Minister Al-Maliki and Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari announced further measures against PKK while calling for political dialogue to resolve the issue. Three offices of a Kurdish party sympathetic to PKK were subsequently closed, in Arbil, Dahuk and Sulaymaniyah. I have expressed concern about PKK elements carrying out terrorist attacks in Turkey from northern Iraq. I have also publicly voiced my concern about repeated Turkish air strikes into northern Iraq, in view of media reports of possible civilian casualties. I once again appeal to the Governments of Iraq and Turkey to work together to prevent these kinds of attacks from continuing.

18. On 2 and 3 November I attended the second expanded meeting of foreign ministers of neighbouring States of Iraq in Istanbul. Participants included Egypt, Bahrain, the five permanent Members of the Security Council, the members of the Group of Eight, the European Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Participants discussed the internal stability and border security of Iraq and a continuous expanded neighbours' cooperation process. They endorsed an ad hoc Baghdad-based support mechanism assisted by the United Nations. The meeting reaffirmed the functions of the three working groups established at the first expanded neighbour's conference, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. Kuwait offered to host the next expanded neighbours' ministerial meeting.

19. Cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Syrian Arab Republic continued, with attempts to improve economic and security cooperation through a range of new initiatives. On 9 November, nine Iranian nationals were released from United States (multinational force) custody. Three days earlier, the Islamic Republic of Iran opened a consulate in Arbil. In mid-November, Iraqi Government officials confirmed that work had started on a major underwater oil pipeline between Basra and Abadan (Islamic Republic of Iran). On 10 November, the Syrian Arab Republic permitted foreign diplomats to visit one part of its border with Iraq to observe improved control and security measures.

20. Both the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan will begin to require visas for Iraqi citizens. In mid-October, the Syrian Arab Republic implemented the decision, initially announced on 10 September, and allowed Iraqi citizens meeting specific criteria to obtain visas at the border. Jordan has also announced the introduction of a visa regime for Iraqi arrivals, which is expected to be in place shortly. In mid-November, a study commissioned by the Government of Jordan on Iraqi refugees living in Jordan and released by the Norwegian Research Institute estimated that between 450,000 and 500,000 Iraqis were living in Jordan, a figure lower than previously estimated.

21. At the end of November, Iraq confirmed it was transferring funds to the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan to compensate them for their assistance to Iraqi refugees. The Government of Iraq allocated $15 million for the Syrian Arab Republic, $8 million for Jordan and $2 million for Lebanon, as first pledged at a conference held by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in

Geneva in April. The Government of Iraq sought to encourage the return of Iraqi refugees, making transport available to bring its citizens back, especially from the Syrian Arab Republic. UNHCR stressed the need for enabling conditions to permit the safe and voluntary return of those who had left Iraq for reasons of security.

III. Activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq

Political activities

22. Prior to his departure from the Mission on 23 October, my Special Representative, Ashraf Qazi, met with senior members of the Government, the Council of Representatives and the diplomatic community in Baghdad. He called for their continued support for the expanded mandate of UNAMI under resolution 1770 (2007) and stressed the importance of greater national dialogue. My new Special Representative, Staffan de Mistura, arrived in Baghdad on 11 November and immediately established contact with authorities of the Government of Iraq to ascertain their views in order to identify "results-oriented" activities of UNAMI related to the implementation of resolution 1770 (2007). He also met with a wide range of figures from across the political and religious spectrum, as well as representatives of the international community and coalition officials.

23. The above-mentioned ministerial conference, held on 2 and 3 November in Istanbul, endorsed the formation of an ad hoc expanded neighbours' "support mechanism" in Baghdad by the Government of Iraq. It also welcomed the offer by the United Nations to provide resources to such a support mechanism. The Iraqi Foreign Ministry agreed with UNAMI on a road map for the Mission's engagement prior to the next expanded ministerial meeting, to be hosted by Kuwait. The terms of reference for the ad hoc support mechanism were sent to those participating in the Istanbul conference, and formal comments are expected. UNAMI is in contact with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iraq to ensure that the momentum to establish the support mechanism and move the process forward is maintained.

24. During his first official visit to the Iraqi Kurdistan region on 26 November, my Special Representative formally inaugurated the regional United Nations office in Arbil in the presence of the Prime Minister of the region, Nechirvan Barzani, and other representatives of the Kurdistan regional government, members of the diplomatic corps and United Nations staff. The Kurdistan regional government authorities asked Mr. De Mistura to pursue a UNAMI facilitation role regarding article 140 of the Iraqi Constitution and stressed the need for the expansion of United Nations programmes, particularly at a time when other foreign missions were being established in the region.

25. The status of Kirkuk and of disputed internal boundaries continued to be subject to discussion, as it became clear that the timetable for a referendum under article 140 could not be met for technical and logistical reasons. During the reporting period, my outgoing Special Representative, Mr. Qazi, his Deputy, Michael von der Schulenburg, and my new Special Representative, Mr. De Mistura all visited Arbil to engage in discussions aimed at exploring the scope for possible means of implementing article 140 and establishing a consensus among all political parties on the way forward. The UNAMI Electoral Assistance Office provided technical advice to the Independent High Electoral Commission on the necessary preconditions for a successful referendum.

26. As the 31 December 2007 deadline established under article 140 approached, my Special Representative proactively engaged in intensive consultations with the leadership in Baghdad and Arbil, as well as other important stakeholders, with a view to trying to defuse rising tensions. On 14 December, following separate meetings he had held with all five principal political leaders, the Special Representative sent letters to the three members of the Presidency Council, as well as the Prime Minister of Iraq and the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan regional government.

27. In those letters and in a subsequent statement issued on 15 December, my Special Representative said that he was pleased to note that there was general agreement among the five on the urgent need to initiate a process to accelerate the implementation of article 140. The process would place particular emphasis on but not be limited to issues relating to the northern provinces of Iraq. In view of the technical and logistical difficulty of holding a referendum prior to 31 December, and given the corresponding need for a technical delay, the next best step would be to initiate, beginning in January 2008 and within six months, a process of facilitating the implementation of article 140 with the technical assistance of the United Nations to the authorities involved, including the High Committee for the Implementation of article 140. This would enable all parties involved to contribute constructively to such a process.

28. On 17 December, my Special Representative again visited Arbil at the request of the authorities of the Kurdistan regional government to participate in an extraordinary session of the Kurdish National Assembly in which the Speaker asked him to introduce the spirit and content of the approach on how to move forward with the implementation of article 140 with the technical assistance of the United Nations. The reaction to the nature of United Nations involvement was positive, and the Assembly formalized its approval on 26 December.

29. UNAMI is planning to re-engage in Basra. As a result of a visit in November, my Deputy Special Representative for Humanitarian, Reconstruction and Development Affairs reported that it would be timely for the United Nations to re-establish a small presence at Basra International Airport until such time as the security and political situation allowed the establishment of a formal United Nations office inside the city. He identified a significant demand for UNAMI substantive sections to deploy staff to the province to monitor the situation. Subsequently, my Special Representative visited the city to attend the Third Reconstruction Forum. This event provided a venue for the Government to coordinate development activities with the authorities in Basra Province, in addition to facilitating efforts to defuse some tensions that had built up in recent months between the central Government and the governorate.

Constitutional support activities

30. It is anticipated that in early January 2008, the Chair of the Constitutional Review Committee, Sheikh Humam Hammoudi, will request an additional extension of the constitutional review process beyond the current deadline of 31 December 2007 for at least an additional six-month period. The Committee would then submit a final report to the Council of Representatives for approval. It is generally acknowledged that the remaining contentious issues require a high-level political consensus on the foundational elements of the Iraqi State, including the power of the

Presidency, the relative competencies of governorates and regions versus the centre and the institutional framework for the allocation of oil and gas revenues.

31. During the reporting period, the Office of Constitutional Support of UNAMI, together with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and with generous funding support from the European Commission, has developed highly focused capacity-building training sessions to be held in India and Northern Ireland early in 2008 for the benefit of members of the Constitutional Review Committee. The aim is to provide the Committee with concrete opportunities to engage in dialogue with public officials who were directly involved in political negotiations concerning the resolution of internal conflict and the allocation of federal resources in other jurisdictions. A series of follow-up round-table discussions would then allow Committee members to share their findings in the context of the ongoing political debate in Iraq. The third component of this European Commission-funded project will consist of outreach missions by the Presidency of the Committee to neighbouring countries.

32. Resolution 1770 (2007) gave the Office of Constitutional Support the task of assisting in the development of constitutionally mandated legislation. Accordingly, the Office has engaged with leading members of parliamentary subcommittees and Baghdad-based representatives of the international community. In November, the Office met with the Legal Committee, the Regions Committee, the Security and Defence Committee, and the Debaathification Committee to offer technical advice, upon request, on draft legislation and to collect information on the legislative priorities of each committee. UNAMI has also taken on the role of co-chair of the International Legislative Round Table, an informal mechanism developed jointly by the Office, the delegation of the European Commission and the embassies of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America to facilitate information-sharing and to coordinate advice to the Iraqi Council of Representatives and other Government bodies.

Electoral assistance activities

33. UNAMI continues to work with the Independent High Electoral Commission to help ensure that it reaches the appropriate state of preparedness for future electoral events. Activities have focused on the immediate and strategic needs of the Commission. Priority areas include providing input into key electoral legislation, building field structures, continued institution-building and developing a credible voter registry.

34. Of importance to any future election is the need for electoral legislation to be revised, particularly that relating to the complex issue of the inclusion of internally displaced persons and refugees. UNAMI also continues to promote vigorously the independence and impartiality of the Commission itself and has worked closely with members of the Board of Commissioners, the Council of Representatives and various parliamentary committees to advocate for legislative amendments to reduce drastically political interference in the work of the Commission.

35. Twelve of the nineteen directors of governorate election offices have been selected. This moves the Commission closer to attaining a functioning and reliable field structure. UNAMI observed the selection process and made recommendations for improvements to enable the remaining positions to be filled. UNAMI believes that the adoption of these suggestions could greatly mitigate the possible political

influence stemming from the role of the Council of Representatives in the selection process.

36. In this connection, at the request of the Presidency of the Council of Representatives and heads of the political blocs, on 1 December my Special Representative and the Chief Technical Electoral Adviser attended a meeting to resolve outstanding difficulties over the appointment of managers of the governorate electoral offices. As a result, all the political blocs agreed to the appointment of one governorate electoral offices director supported by two assistants for administrative and technical issues.

37. As the field structure of the Commission takes shape, UNAMI and its partner organizations (UNDP, UNOPS, IFES and Scuola SantAnna) have continued numerous capacity-building activities to rebuild the Commission planned for the reporting period. A study mission hosted by the National Election Commission of the Republic of Korea was conducted in October. Institutional ties with other election commissions continued, with a field trip to observe the federal elections in Australia conducted in November. Staff of the Commission have participated in more than a dozen workshops, seminars and training activities in Baghdad, Arbil and Jordan. Full cooperation between UNAMI and the Commission continues in the development of internal financial and human resources best practices, which are essential for building the Commission's credibility and independence.

38. Substantial progress has been made in developing a reliable approach for voter registration. The Commission received a copy of the public distribution system database and has been working with international experts to convert the data into a usable voter roll. While UNAMI will continue to work closely with the Commission, significant challenges remain to holding elections in Iraq. UNAMI notes with concern the slow progress made in passing vital election legislation key to identifying voter eligibility and thus essential for updating and preparing a voter registry.

Humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and development

39. The United Nations increased its administrative and technical support for the secretariat of the International Compact with Iraq. In conjunction with World Bank advisers, the United Nations has assisted in the preparation of a framework and schedule for the first annual review of the Compact in early 2008 and has developed a six-month implementation plan. A UNOPS consultancy firm is providing the Policy Planning Unit of the secretariat, which joined the Compact in early December, with technical assistance.

40. At the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq Donor conference in Bari, Italy, on 29 October, donors supported the use of the Iraq Trust Fund to reinforce the International Compact with Iraq. In Baghdad on 8 December, the Executive Committee of the Facility endorsed governance and operational changes to the Fund. The Baghdad Coordination Group, meeting on 10 December and attended by the Prime Minister and my Special Representative, reached agreement on a strategic framework that would better align the remaining International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq funds in support of Compact priorities, stress Government ownership of programmes and, most importantly, endorse the critical concept of cofinancing. Changes to strengthen the oversight, monitoring and evaluation capacity of the Steering Committee Support Office of the Compact have

been launched by my Deputy Special Representative for Humanitarian, Reconstruction and Development Affairs, including the appointment of a new head of the Support Office.

41. On 1 December the United Nations country team cluster coordination system was replaced by a set of sector outcome teams, designed to be more inclusive and consistent with the Iraq national development strategy, the planned outcomes of the International Compact with Iraq and the Millennium Development Goals. A policy group has been established in Baghdad comprising essential services, protection, governance and economic development. Consequently, it is now envisaged that an increased number of substantive United Nations agency staff in Baghdad will work more coherently, in close cooperation with UNAMI sections, to lead policy formulation related to development, reconstruction and humanitarian assistance.

42. A consolidated appeal process is under way to provide more support to vulnerable groups, including but not limited to internally displaced persons and returnees. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has established a humanitarian inter-agency group that will coordinate the finalization of the appeal in January 2008. In a separate development, the Emergency Relief Coordinator has announced the transfer of $5 million to the emergency response fund in Iraq, which over the last quarter has channelled some $2 million to non-governmental organizations operating in Iraq.

43. In response to trends indicated by border monitoring and reports of the Iraq Ministry of Displacement and Migration, UNHCR engaged in inter-agency rapid-response planning in late November. UNHCR believes that until security conditions are conducive to a safe and dignified return and allow for sufficient monitoring, it cannot promote the return of refugees to Iraq. A joint Government of Iraq/United Nations rapid response plan for immediate assistance to Iraqi returnees, developed by the new protection policy group in Baghdad with UNAMI, UNHCR, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the International Organization for Migration, was launched in Baghdad on 4 December. The plan provides $11.4 million to assist 5,000 families (approximately 30,000 persons) voluntarily returning to Iraq for three months and supports the Ministry for Displacement and Migration with a monitoring and registration process. A longer-term policy framework on internally displaced persons is being developed.

44. From 1 September to 30 November 2007, UNHCR assisted more than 166,000 displaced persons nationwide. Non-food items reached 54,400 internally displaced persons and other vulnerable individuals, helping them to meet basic survival needs in crisis locations (Diyala, Baghdad and scattered encampments in the north and south of Iraq). Community-based work increased community absorption capacity, benefiting more than 15,000 internally displaced persons as well as their host communities nationwide.

45. The wide-scale distribution of kits and emergency shelter is planned for the winter in a programme that has benefited 21,000 recent internally displaced persons over the past year. The capacity of UNHCR in-country and regional stockpiles has been increased to 300,000 persons, not including planned distribution and shelter support capacity for up to 60,000 refugees and internally displaced returnees to Baghdad. The International Organization for Migration assisted 8,500 internally displaced persons and host families in Diyala, Basra, Ninawa and Anbar and 500 families affected by explosions in Sinjar (Ninawa). It provided another

150 internally displaced families in the Girdassen tented camp with winterization items.

46. A three-pronged strategy developed jointly by the World Food Programme and the Government of Iraq will provide food assistance to 750,000 vulnerable internally displaced persons for 12 months starting in December 2007, provide an update to the food security survey in 18 governorates and build the capacity of the Government of Iraq to enhance the public distribution system.

47. The World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNDP played a critical role in helping to contain cases and treat victims of the cholera outbreak in Iraq. While the emergency is over in much of the country, there is a risk that the disease may resurface in the second quarter of 2008, particularly in the poorest areas of Baghdad. Preventive measures, public awareness campaigns and longer-term water-treatment projects are under way to mitigate such risk, but need to be accelerated by the Government of Iraq in order to avoid a serious crisis.

48. UNICEF successfully supported the "back-to-school" campaign in Iraq, which saw an estimated 6 million children return to the classroom for the new school year. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization launched a website containing electronic copies of many Iraqi textbooks to facilitate access of refugees and internally displaced persons (or those non-governmental organizations assisting them) to educational materials. UNICEF, with the participation of senior Iraqi authorities, some provincial reconstruction teams and the UNAMI Human Rights Office, co-hosted a landmark multi-stakeholder consultation on juvenile justice on 3 and 4 December in Amman, inter alia to assist an estimated 1,350 children who were being detained by the multinational force and Iraqi authorities.

49. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme completed the rehabilitation of about 48 educational institutions in Baghdad, Basra, Maysan, Samawah and Nasiriya in addition to other community buildings. A framework for reforming vocational education was also agreed to. The Programme has progressed in building the capacity of the Ministry of Construction and Housing for decentralized strategies, national housing policy, local area development planning and training.

50. The United Nations Population Fund has continued to support emergency obstetric care, reproductive health and safe motherhood in Iraq, thus contributing to the reduction of the maternal mortality rate, one of the main national priorities in the national health strategy. It is rehabilitating a large number of maternity wards, equipping them with essential medical equipment and supplies and providing clinical and technical capacity-building to medical and paramedical staff and non-governmental organizations.

51. On 12 December, my Special Representative attended the third Reconstruction Forum in Basra, an opportunity for the central authorities to announce a transfer of funds to support major projects in Basra, especially those related to the reconstruction of the harbour and the delivery of essential social services. The United Nations reiterated its support for provincial capacity to plan and manage reconstruction and development activities, in line with the national development strategy, including through the recently launched UNDP-sponsored local area

development programme, and a $30 million donation from the European Union to promote the implementation of community projects.

52. As at 31 December, total contributions to the United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund, one of the two funds of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq, equalled $1.28 billion. A total of 134 projects and joint programmes valued at $1.08 billion had been approved as at the end of 2007 for funding under the Trust Fund. Continuing the significant progress achieved in implementation, contracts worth cumulatively $806 million (75 per cent of approved funding) had been entered into and $700 million (65 per cent of approved funding) had been disbursed as at the end of November. Monthly financial updates are available on the Facility's website (www.irffi.org). Contributions in the fourth quarter to the Trust Fund included: €22 million ($30.5 million) from Spain, €6 million ($8.5 million) from the European Commission, $10 million from the Republic of Korea, and Skr 20 million ($3.03 million) from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Human rights activities

53. Indiscriminate and targeted violence continued to claim civilian victims, even though the overall number of reported attacks and casualties had declined. Professionals, including journalists, lawyers, medical and education staff and public administrators, as well as members of minority groups and women, continued to be targeted by various criminal groups. In one of the largest and most recent incidents, on 12 December a coordinated suicide car attack in Amarah reportedly killed 40 people and injured 125. In addition, about a dozen women were reported killed in Basra, allegedly by religious extremists seeking to impose a strict moral behaviour code.

54. There are continued reports implicating private security companies in the killing of civilians or bystanders, allegedly in self-defence. In recent months, a number of such incidents have attracted wide media attention and official complaints by Iraqi authorities. The result has been a tightening of control over those companies by the United States Departments of State and Defense and the extension of court-martial proceedings to some contractors for serious offences.

55. The UNAMI Human Rights Office continued to visit detention facilities and prisons at the invitation of the Ministries of Justice, Defence, Interior and Labour and Social Affairs in Baghdad and in the Kurdistan region. The Human Rights Office raised specific observations and concerns with relevant authorities, notably, prolonged detention without judicial oversight and limited or no access to legal counsel. The Office also interviewed a number of detainees and identified serious violations in the treatment of detainees and juveniles during the investigation period.

56. In order to support the Iraqi Government in the discharge of its obligations under international human rights law, particularly those relating to detainees in multinational force and Iraqi Government facilities, UNAMI organized and delivered specialized meetings and workshops for the staff of the Ministries of Human Rights and Justice, as well as Members of Parliament and the national non-governmental sector. Those sessions focused on the rule of law and human rights and included a seminar in the Kurdistan region that was specifically aimed at the integration of human rights protection into counter-terrorism strategies and

practices. In addition, UNAMI organized training courses and workshops for non-governmental organizations and Iraqi officials on psychosocial and legal counselling for women who had fallen victim to violence and on key international norms relating to children's rights and juvenile justice.

57. My Special Representative addressed conferences hosted by the Ministries of Interior and Human Rights on 5 and 9 December respectively to mark the anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He took the opportunity to urge the Government of Iraq to ratify the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in 2008.

Operational, logistic and security issues

58. The security situation in Iraq continues to severely limit the daily activities of UNAMI. The incidence of indirect fire aimed at the International Zone in Baghdad declined significantly during the reporting period. Since 1 October, there have been three indirect fire attacks within the Zone. Two attacks were recorded on 22 November when an estimated total of 42 projectiles impacted various locations in the Zone, killing 2 and wounding 12. The last indirect fire attack was on 9 December, when three rockets impacted the Zone. Fortunately, no United Nations personnel were injured. The intensive mortar barrage on 22 November demonstrated that despite some gradual improvements in the security situation in Baghdad, armed opposition groups retain the intent and capability to attack the Zone.

59. Within the International Zone, United Nations personnel are obliged to comply with curfew and movement restrictions. These security procedures and other mitigating measures exist to minimize the risk from indirect fire, abduction and the threat of attack by improvised explosive devices. All staff members now have accommodations with overhead protection to enhance security during indirect fire. The threat of attack from improvised explosive devices continues to be widespread in Iraq, and the development of explosive detection techniques and blast mitigation measures continues in order to better protect United Nations facilities.

60. National staff members continue to encounter serious security-related problems, and many have been forced to relocate their families out of Baghdad to safer areas in Iraq as well as safer neighbouring countries to escape sectarian and insurgent violence. National staff members continue to receive violent and intimidating threats via the local mobile phone network, mostly by text message.

61. The proposal for construction of an integrated United Nations headquarters in Baghdad, still the only viable option for the continued presence of the United Nations owing to the high level of security risk, has been considered by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly. The General Assembly, in its resolution 62/238, requested the Secretary-General to submit a new, complete and detailed proposal for the construction of the United Nations integrated compound in Baghdad for its consideration at the first part of its resumed sixty-second session.

62. Construction of sidewall protection and the repair of older overhead protection at the Mission's interim accommodation facility is under way. The Mission is in the process of preparing additional workspace in order to accommodate a foreseen increase in substantive staff in early 2008. While undertaking all available steps to increase self-containment in Iraq, UNAMI intends to continue to employ support

services under the Logistics Civilian Augmentation Programme (LOGCAP) and the related "607 agreement" in cases where there is no equivalent service provider.

63. The United Nations will continue to rely on Member States for support in security and logistical arrangements. I am grateful to Member States that have provided such support to the United Nations presence in Iraq so far. This includes air support and troops for the "distinct entity", which operates under the command of the multinational force with a dedicated mission to provide security for UNAMI. In my last report I appealed to Member States to provide the United Nations with the necessary financial and logistical resources for the Mission, including urgently needed contributions for the trust fund that was established to support the distinct entity. There were concerns that the trust fund would be exhausted by the end of November 2007. I am pleased to report that we have received contributions from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden, which will help the United Nations cover the cost of the distinct entity for at least the first eight months of 2008. I urge Member States that have not done so already to consider contributing to the trust fund to ensure that it has the necessary resources for the remainder of the year.

64. UNAMI has recently dispatched a team to establish a presence at the Basra air station. The UNAMI office in Arbil will also be expanding to provide more accommodation and office space for UNAMI substantive staff and Iraq country team staff working in the region to assist, inter alia, in delivering assistance to displaced persons, supporting the regional authorities in their efforts to reconstruct electricity networks, constructing primary health centres in high-risk districts and carrying out polio immunizations. This is a reflection of the more stable security situation prevailing in Arbil, as well as the need for international humanitarian and development assistance in the area. However, the areas bordering Turkey have been subject to increased political and military tensions since Turkey launched air strikes on Iraqi territory in December in retaliation for PKK cross-border attacks. In addition, the areas bordering the Islamic Republic of Iran have continued to be subjected to artillery shelling from the Iranian side.

65. In the context of the political process, events and views in the governorates are increasingly important. In order to increase the Mission's understanding of emerging political, security, social and economic trends, UNAMI is in the process of selecting national governorate liaison officers in each of the 18 governorates. At present, nine officers have been selected for the following governorates as part of the UNAMI governorate outreach programme: Dhi Qar, Wasit, Salah ad Din, Karbala, Najaf, Hillah, Baghdad, Muthanna and Qadisiyah. They will be deployed in the coming weeks.

66. The Mission remains reliant on the United States, Japan and the United Kingdom to meet its air transportation requirements in the Mission area. Member States have not responded to a request to provide an aircraft equipped with appropriate countermeasures for the movement of United Nations staff into, out of and within Iraq. This capability is considered critical for operational purposes within Iraq and also for the implementation of the regional dimension of Security Council 1770 (2007); therefore, the Mission has initiated a process to procure an aircraft as soon as possible from a commercial provider. UNAMI has also been negotiating with coalition forces to provide a suitable aircraft, with self-defence systems, for use by the Mission until a suitable aircraft is procured.

67. The status-of-mission agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Iraq, signed in June 2005, represents an important legal basis for the unimpeded work of the Mission. According to article XII of the agreement, it shall enter into force on the date on which notes are exchanged by the parties confirming approval of the agreement by their competent authorities. Although the United Nations submitted its note in 2005, the Government of Iraq has yet to complete the ratification process, which is required before its note can be delivered. Despite a number of requests, the status of the agreement remains unchanged. I appeal to the Government of Iraq to ensure that this agreement, which is important for the continued United Nations presence in Iraq, is ratified in a timely manner.

IV. Observations

68. The reduction in the overall number of attacks reported across Iraq is a welcome development. Continued improvement in the security situation is likely to depend on engagement by the Iraqi Security Forces and the multinational force, the extension of the ceasefire by the Mahdi Army and developments related to the awakening councils. However, mass casualty attacks on civilians, such as the triple car bombing in Amarah on 12 December and the series of attacks at the end of December, are a sobering reminder that those using terrorism in pursuit of their political aims have no regard for human rights or human life. In order to sustain recent improvements in the security situation, similar improvements in the political arena are needed.

69. To date, the political process has not shown the degree of progress that many had hoped for. The continuing stalemate over the filling of vacant Cabinet posts is symptomatic of an ongoing uncertainty about the political process. Difficulties in promoting key pieces of legislation reveal a basic lack of consensus over the nature and structure of the Iraqi State. The political parties vigorously debate the Government's programme and seek to subject its workings to close scrutiny, but those discussions have not yet achieved the momentum necessary to reach a breakthrough. My Special Representative will continue to direct UNAMI good offices towards encouraging genuine engagement by the leaders of Iraq on the core political disagreements. I remain hopeful that this will result in a successful conclusion to the constitutional review process.

70. At my instruction, the Special Representative is closely reviewing every aspect of the Mission's work in order to see how progress can be made in implementing the expanded role it was given in resolution 1770 (2007). As a result of the efforts of my Special Representative and the team he is assembling on the ground, as well as enhanced support from Headquarters, the Mission is advancing on several fronts. I am confident that we will continue to witness further progress in the implementation of that important resolution in the coming months.

71. It is encouraging that there is some movement on the ad hoc support mechanism agreed at the Istanbul ministerial conference. However, I call upon the Government of Iraq and the neighbouring countries to cooperate closely with UNAMI to ensure that this mechanism can provide the useful function that is so sorely needed in order to make forthcoming meetings of the expanded neighbours' group, as well as the separate working groups, more productive in terms of the agenda, discussion and subsequent follow-up.

72. The United Nations is determined to provide more effective assistance wherever possible in the Iraqi Kurdistan region and elsewhere in the country, when security conditions permit, and will provide a range of high-level technical services to assist the authorities in meeting their own responsibilities for providing improved public services.

73. Perhaps the most encouraging development in Iraq was the readiness recently shown by the top leadership in Baghdad and Arbil to begin to work cooperatively among themselves and with my Special Representative to ensure that tensions relating to the lapse of the deadline in article 140 did not lead to further violence. I now call upon those leaders and their constituents to continue to move along this path with the same statesmanship and spirit of cooperation they have displayed during the most recent discussions. In particular, I invite them to take advantage of the agreed-upon six-month period and the offer of technical assistance from UNAMI and to make progress in deciding the future of some of the disputed territories. This important objective will, of course, also require cooperation from other parties and communities in Iraq. I therefore call upon members of the international community to assist in this confidence-building effort and to move towards a peaceful resolution, which could also form a significant contribution to wider political dialogue and national reconciliation in Iraq.

74. I welcome the decision to establish a Baghdad-based policy group to coordinate the work of the United Nations country team and the International Compact with Iraq. Significant strides have been made in the reporting period to refashion the structure of the country teams to align their work more closely with the International Compact. The cluster system has been replaced by sector outcome teams to duly recognize the need to demonstrate greater results on the ground. The establishment of a Baghdad policy group also reflects my determination to ensure that the work of all parts of the United Nations system is closely coordinated with the Government of Iraq. In this context, I am pleased to note the establishment of a table of priorities drawn from the International Compact joint monitoring matrix and national development strategy prepared in consultation with the United Nations and the Government of Iraq that will guide the work of the country teams in 2008.

75. I am also pleased by the prompt reaction of the country teams to the request by the Government of Iraq to support its ministries in assisting those refugees and internally displaced persons who have made the voluntary choice of returning to their place of origin. While it is understood that improvements in security are still not sufficient to guarantee protection to those returning, it was encouraging that this United Nations country team/Government of Iraq partnership led to the speedy implementation of a rapid-response plan to assist the returnees.

76. All of the efforts of the United Nations in Iraq are intended to uphold the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the country. I note Prime Minister Al-Maliki's position that efforts should be made to progressively guide the relationship between the Government of Iraq and the United Nations towards a normalized format, outside the purview of Chapter VII of the Charter. The timing of this development is, of course, the prerogative of the Security Council. I will accordingly solicit the views of concerned Member States on what further measures might be taken by the international community as a whole to assist Iraq in its normalization efforts.

77. I wish to take this opportunity to thank my Special Representative for Iraq, Mr. de Mistura, for his outstanding and active leadership since rejoining the Mission. Furthermore, I commend the Mission's national and international staff, as well as the personnel of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, for their dedicated work in fulfilling their mandated tasks under extremely difficult conditions.

United Nations S/2008/20

Security Council

Distr.: General
14 January 2008
English
Original: Arabic

Letter dated 9 January 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

1. Further to my letter of 28 December 2007 regarding the military acts of aggression carried out by the Chadian armed forces inside Sudanese territory, I should like to inform you that the Government of Chad has continued its acts of aggression and violations of the Sudanese borders over the past few days. In fact, the President of Chad himself, M. Idriss Deby Itno, has confirmed that his country's military actions were deliberate and that it would continue to pursue them with full force.

2. On the morning of 5 January 2008, in a speech delivered at Independence Square in the Chadian capital, N'Djamena, President Itno publicly declared that Chadian forces would attack positions inside the Sudan. The President unambiguously confirmed in that speech that aggression had become his Government's policy and fixed course. This policy is a clear violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations as well as a blatant violation of all the agreements signed between the two countries.

3. At exactly 0430 hours on 6 January 2008, a day after President Itno's aforementioned speech, the Chadian air force carried out those threats and bombed the Sudanese villages of Juwkar and Wadi Rati`, which are only 35 km from Geneina, resulting in great loss of life and property.

4. These Chadian attacks on Sudanese territory, by land and by air, are not the result of the latest developments. The Government of Chad has a long record of transgressions, violations and acts of aggression that are in stark and continued violation of the principles of good-neighbourliness and of the commitments it has entered into. An account of the provocations and chronology of aggressions over the past few months is provided below:

(a) On 6 October 2007, a Chadian helicopter flew over the city of Kulbus. Later that day, two fighter planes overflew that same area. This violation occurred again over that same city the following day.

(b) On 20 October 2007, a Chadian fighter plane breached Sudanese airspace over the Mastri area in the western sector.

(c) On 19 November 2007, four Chadian fighter planes, coming from Chadian territory, repeatedly overflew the Sudanese region of Um Dukhun at very low altitudes on more than seven occasions.

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(d) On 27 November 2007, a Chadian fighter plane flew at low altitude over Sudanese forces positions in the area of Tandalti in the western sector of the western region.

(e) On 28 November 2007, at 1030 hours, Chadian fighter planes thrice violated Sudanese airspace, over the city of Kulbus.

(f) On 28 December 2007, Chadian planes breached Sudanese airspace over the areas of Kadkuli and Rijl al-Harazaya, near the region of Mastri. Three helicopters bombed those areas at 0400, 0600 and 0740 hours, injuring a number of citizens and burning a number of farms.

(g) On 1 January 2008, at 2200 hours, Chadian planes flying from west to east breached Sudanese airspace over the city of Kulbus.

(h) On 6 January 2008, at 0420 hours, as is known, Chadian helicopters bombed the area of Wadi Rati` and injured seven citizens, five of whom subsequently died.

5. The Government of the Sudan, which has followed a policy of prudence and self-restraint, is exasperated and would once again like to bring these flagrant, unjustified aggressions by its neighbour, Chad, to your attention. It would also like to re-emphasize that allowing the Government of Chad to continue its aggression would severely undermine not only the efforts aimed at peacefully resolving the question of Darfur, but would also put the security and peace of the entire region in jeopardy.

6. Finally, I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem **Mohamad**
Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Sudan
to the United Nations

United Nations S/2008/21

Security Council

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15 January 2008
English
Original: French

Letter dated 15 January 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Chad to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Further to my note of 31 December 2007, I should like to take this opportunity to deny the Sudanese allegations that have sought to portray Chad as an aggressor against the Sudan, when in fact the Government of that neighbouring country is disregarding its commitments with respect to dialogue, peace and security, particularly those contained in the Tripoli Agreement of 8 February 2006 and the Riyadh Agreement of 3 May 2007. Accordingly, my Government categorically denies the false allegations put forward by the Sudan, which come as no surprise, considering that the authorities of that country have not matched their actions to their words. I need not recall the details contained in our various letters addressed to the Security Council, from December 2005 to the present, highlighting the facts and the acts of aggression and destabilization committed by the Sudan against Chad; the last such note was dated 31 December 2007. If necessary, a chronology of events can be transmitted to you shortly. Moreover, Chad has the right to defend itself under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations on the inherent right of self-defence, which is applicable in the current instance.

It should be stressed that, despite the commitments it has undertaken, the Sudanese Government has never stopped organizing and arming hostile groups in its territory for the purpose of destabilizing Chad, not to mention the collateral effects, with thousands of Darfur refugees and Chadian displaced persons in eastern Chad. The Sudan is determined and secretly plotting to use every possible means to install a compliant regime in N'Djamena prior to the deployment of the European Union operation (EUFOR) and to resolve its internal crisis in Darfur by making Chad a victim.

In these circumstances, Chad cannot continue to wait indefinitely, and is only exercising its legitimate right to defend itself.

In any event, Chad does not commit acts of aggression or destabilization, does not violate its commitments and does not harbour any Sudanese rebels, contrary to what the Sudanese Government has said and done. Chad continues to respect its commitments under the above-mentioned agreements. It has no interest in attacking a neighbouring country and wants only to live in peace within its internationally recognized borders and with its neighbours.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mahamat Ali **Adoum**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

08-20841 (E) 150108 150108

United Nations A/62/646–S/2008/22

General Assembly
Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixty-second session
Agenda item 17
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Identical letters dated 15 January 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I transmit to you herewith a statistical summary of Israeli violations committed from 1 to 7 January 2008 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 17, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nawaf **Salam**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

08-20979 (E) 170108 170108

Annex to the identical letters dated 15 January 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Israeli violations, acts of aggression and other activities from 1 to 7 January 2008, inclusive

Air violations

On 1 January 2008:

- Between 1630 and 1800 hours, an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft overflew the regions of Jazzin and Nabatiyah;
- Between 2007 and 2130 hours, an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace; it entered over the sea off Tyre, circled over the sea between Sidon and Naqurah, then left over the sea off Naqurah;
- At 1918 hours, an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace; it entered over the Shab'a Farms, circled over the regions of Riyaq, Baalbek and the south, then left at 0018 hours on 2 January 2008 over Khiyam.

On 2 January 2008, Israeli enemy warplanes overflew the regions of Bint Jubayl and Tibnin at various altitudes.

On 3 January 2008, between 0910 and 0920 hours, Israeli enemy warplanes overflew the Bint Jubayl region at high altitude.

On 6 December 2007:

- Between 1008 and 1110 hours, two Israeli enemy warplanes violated Lebanese airspace; they entered over Kafr Kila heading north, proceeded as far as Shikka, circled over the regions of al-Arz, the Bekaa and Beirut, then headed south and left over Alma al-Sha'b;
- Between 1015 and 1052 hours, four Israeli enemy warplanes violated Lebanese airspace; they entered over Kafr Kila heading north, proceeded as far as Beirut, circled between Beirut and the regions of the south, then left over Alma al-Sha'b;
- Between 1800 and 1900 hours, an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft overflew the Naqurah area.

Sea violations

On 1 January 2008, between 2000 and 2100 hours, an Israeli enemy gunboat inside occupied Palestinian territorial waters off Ra's Naqurah fired a flare shell over Lebanese territorial waters, while another gunboat directed a searchlight for 15 seconds towards Lebanese territorial waters.

On 2 January 2008, at 2115 hours, an Israeli enemy gunboat inside occupied Palestinian territorial waters off the Ra's Naqurah post directed a searchlight for 12 seconds towards Lebanese territorial waters.

Acts of aggression in the field

On 2 January 2008:

- At 1711 hours, an Israeli enemy military vehicle in the vicinity of the observation tower of the Manara settlement shined a searchlight for two minutes towards the Lebanese Army's observation tower at al-Manara/Houla.

- At 1845 hours, the Israeli enemy shined a searchlight for two minutes and twenty seconds from the western gate of the Zar`it barracks towards the Marwahin triangle. At 2045 hours, the enemy shined a searchlight for 20 seconds from the aforementioned post towards the same triangle.

On 3 January 2008, at 0055 hours, the Israeli enemy shined a searchlight mounted on a Hummer vehicle for 10 seconds from point *ghayn*-31 (the Zar`it barracks) towards Jabal Balat (Marwahin).

On 4 January 2008, at 2140 hours, Israeli enemy forces shined a searchlight for 15 seconds from their position at Saliha towards the Lebanese Army post and its perimeter in the town of Marun al-Ra's.

On 5 January 2008, at 1855 hours, the Israeli enemy shined a searchlight for 15 seconds from the western gate of the Zar`it barracks towards the observation post of the Lebanese Army, the observation post of the Ghanaian contingent and the Marwahin triangle. At 2005 hours, the Israeli enemy shined a searchlight for one minute from its position at Saliha towards the plain of the town of Marun al-Ra's.

On 6 January 2008:

- At 1740 hours, inside occupied Palestinian territory opposite the town of al-`Adaysa, an Israeli enemy patrol made up of two Hummer vehicles twice shined a searchlight for 50 seconds towards the Lebanese Army checkpoint at al-`Adaysa. In response, personnel stationed at the checkpoint shined a searchlight from an "REO" truck for 30 seconds towards the aforementioned patrol.

- At 1835 hours, searchlights from two Hummer vehicles at the Saliha position were directed at the plain of Marun al-Ra's for three minutes.

- At 2025 hours, an Israeli enemy patrol comprising three Hummer vehicles shined a searchlight from the vicinity of the Zar`it barracks towards the outskirts of Marwahin. In response, personnel at the Ghanaian contingent's checkpoint in the town's triangle shined a searchlight for 15 seconds towards those barracks.

On 7 January 2008:

- At 1600 hours, on the outskirts of the towns of Halta and Hasbayya, near the occupied Shab`a Farms, Israeli enemy forces kidnapped the citizen Fadi Abdul Al as he was herding some cattle.

- At 1930 hours, the Israeli enemy shined a searchlight for one and a half minutes from the western gate of the Zar`it barracks towards the Marwahin triangle. At 2245 hours, the enemy then shined a searchlight for two minutes from the same barracks towards the aforementioned area and then, at 2310 hours, did so once again for a period of 15 seconds.

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Security Council

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General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Identical letters dated 15 January 2008 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

War crimes are being committed against the Palestinian civilian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory by Israel, the occupying Power, which has never, despite any and all peace efforts, ceased its crimes and merciless human rights violations against the Palestinian people. In this regard, I regret to inform you that, in the 10 days since my last letter to you, the occupying Power has killed at least another 37 Palestinians, including several children.

Even as we engage in direct bilateral negotiations in the fragile peace process resumed between the Palestinian and Israeli sides, the occupying Power, rather than promoting calm and undertaking confidence-building measures, has instead intensified its military campaign, spreading more death, destruction and terror among the civilian population, particularly in the Gaza Strip. Such illegal acts of aggression by the occupying Power poison the atmosphere, inevitably undermining peace efforts and fuelling the dreaded cycle of violence that has so long plagued our peoples.

In the latest escalation, early today, 15 January 2008, the Israeli occupying forces launched a large-scale attack against civilian areas in Gaza City, targeting the Al-Zaitun and Al-Shujaiya neighbourhoods of the city. Occupying forces in tanks, armoured vehicles and bulldozers raged through the area under the cover of helicopter gunships and warplanes, killing at least 19 Palestinians, including a 65-year-old man, As'aad Issa Tafesh. Fifty other Palestinians were injured in the attacks, including an eight-year-old boy who has been critically wounded, and many of the wounded now in Gaza's overburdened hospitals are reported to have lost limbs in the onslaught. In addition to using such deadly and indiscriminate force against the civilian population, the Israeli occupying forces also caused more damage to the area by bulldozing dozens of acres of farmlands, orchards and agricultural fields and destroying other civilian property. Such wilful killing of civilians and the wanton destruction of property constitute war crimes under the Fourth Geneva Convention, for which Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable.

08-21003 (E) 170108

The international community must view this recent Israeli military assault against the Palestinian people with utmost seriousness, for the short and long-term consequences of this escalation of violence are far-ranging and could completely derail nascent peace efforts if not immediately ceased. The situation in the Gaza Strip is particularly grave. There, the Palestinian civilian population remains under a crippling siege and continues to suffer a humanitarian crisis that is greatly worsened by such illegal acts of violence and terror by the occupying Power. In addition to causing more suffering for the population and further destabilizing the situation on the ground in the Gaza Strip, Israel's actions incite, provoke and ignite the cycle of violence we have been exerting all efforts to break.

Military attacks, terror and aggression by the occupying Power against the civilian population under its occupation are totally incompatible with peacemaking. Peacemaking requires at the minimum a cessation of violations, respect for international law and efforts to build confidence and promote reconciliation. Peacemaking cannot survive in an environment where all kinds of grave breaches of the law are being committed by the occupying Power. The security pretext constantly used by Israel, the occupying Power, cannot justify the slaughter of innocent civilians and the systematic violation of their human rights. If Israel, the occupying Power, is never held accountable for these crimes, it will only be further emboldened to continue acting with impunity in its trampling of the law and its aggressions against the Palestinian people. The result will be more hardship and loss for the people and will gravely undermine the Palestinian Authority's engagement in the peace process.

The international community, including the Security Council, has clear responsibilities in this regard. Israel, the occupying Power, must be compelled to cease all violations against the Palestinian people and to respect international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention. The occupying Power must be urged to pursue the path of peace in good faith and, in addition to ceasing violations, to undertake real confidence-building measures to improve the situation on the ground and advance the peace process towards its ultimate goals of peace and security for both peoples. We are at a critical juncture that requires urgent efforts to prevent the further decline of the situation and to save the peace process from irreparable damage. All must shoulder their responsibilities.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 305 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 4 January 2008 (A/ES-10/409 and Corr.1-S/2008/8 and Corr.1), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

In follow-up to the above-mentioned letters, it is my deep regret to inform you that at least 37 more Palestinian civilians, including children, have been killed by the Israeli occupying forces, raising the total number of martyrs killed since September 2000 to 4,899 (the names of the martyrs that have been identified are listed in the annex to the present letter).

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer

Annex to the identical letters dated 15 January 2008 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Names of martyrs killed by the Israeli occupying forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem* (From Saturday, 5 January 2008 to Tuesday, 15 January 2008)

Saturday, 5 January 2008

1. Mohammad Ahmad Abu Odeh

Sunday, 6 January 2008

2. Iman Hamdan
3. Ahmad Mohammad Khalaf
4. Mahmoud Rabah Abed (19)
5. Muhannad Darghma
6. Ziyad Abu Rukba (16)
7. Mahmoud Al-Rab'ei

Monday, 7 January 2008

8. Fawwaz Awni Freihat (19)
9. Bassem Ahmad Abu Mostafa
10. Maysaa' Nimr Fanouna (19)

Wednesday, 9 January 2008

11. Khadra Wahdan
12. Mohammad Al-Kafarna
13. Amjad Abdel Dyem

Saturday, 12 January 2008

14. Ayed Sa'adallah Abu Abed
15. Mansour Salah Al-Boraim (18)

Sunday, 13 January 2008

16. Nidal Al-Amoudi
17. Maher Al-Mabhouh
18. Hammouda Razqa

* The total number of Palestinian martyrs killed by the Israeli occupying forces since 28 September 2000 is 4,899.

Tuesday, 15 January 2008

19. Abdallah Taleb Al-Moghanni
20. Hossam Mahmoud Al-Zahhar
21. Rami Talal Farahat
22. Aahed Saa'dallah Ashour
23. Marwan Sameer Odeh
24. Mahmoud Ata Abu Laban
25. Saleem Abdel Haq Al-Modallal
26. Abdallah Al-Haj Salem
27. Sakhr Saleem Zwayed
28. Mostafa Yahya Selmi (19)
29. Mos'ab Saleem Selmi (18)
30. Mohammad Sabri Hana
31. Mohammad Majdi Hajji
32. Sa'eed Mostafa Al-Sammouni
33. As'aad Issa Tafesh
34. Ayman Fadel Malaka
35. Abdel Salam Abu Laban (19)
36. Ahmad Nasr Al-Attal
37. Marwan Hamada

United Nations A/62/647–S/2008/24

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Security Council

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16 January 2008

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General Assembly
Sixty-second session
Agenda items 17 and 18

The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Identical letters dated 15 January 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

In 2005, Israel disengaged from the Gaza Strip with the hope that the Palestinians would govern the area responsibly. Regrettably, this did not happen. Since then my delegation has repeatedly warned that Gaza is turning into a launching pad for violence and terrorism. Over the past few years, and particularly in recent months, we have written to inform you of this fact. Since June 2007, when Hamas violently took control of Gaza, more than 1,000 Qassam rockets and mortar shells were fired at Israel. And Hamas and other Palestinian terrorist groups continue their quest to murder Israelis and destroy Israel.

As we have said before, Israel will not stand idly by as its citizens are under constant attack. Israel reserves the right to defend itself from all armed attacks, as any other nation would, according to its inherent right under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. My delegation has repeatedly pressed the United Nations to denounce all acts of violence and terrorism, and condemn States that aid and abet terrorists groups, which is a violation of their obligations under international law, as well as Security Council resolutions. Yet the violence continues and nothing is done to end terrorism or support for it.

In this light, I regret to inform you of two particularly alarming acts of terrorism which occurred today, and that underscore the urgency for action and the need to counter the violence from Gaza. Early this morning, a Palestinian terrorist shot and killed Carlos Andres Chavez, a 20-year-old volunteer from Ecuador, who was working in Kibbutz Ein Hashlosha, located near the coast in southern Israel. Later in the day, at least four people were wounded, including a woman and her five-year-old daughter after their home sustained a direct hit by a rocket in the southern town of Sderot. More than 25 Qassam rockets were fired by Palestinian terrorists. An additional 24 mortars were fired by Hamas and others.

08-20991 (E) 170108

These vicious acts of Palestinian terrorism are indicative of the daily and fatal dangers facing Israeli civilians, particularly those living near the Gaza Strip. Normal life has been interrupted in Sderot, where there was no electricity for several hours today following the attack. While Israel remains committed to advancing the peace process — as demonstrated by the meeting yesterday between Israeli and Palestinian negotiators, which continued in the spirit of Annapolis — the Palestinian Authority has not succeeded to effectively combat terrorism and fulfil its obligations under the various agreements, including the Road Map. As these two attacks remind us, Palestinian terrorism remains the greatest obstacle to peace and security in the region. The Palestinian leadership must stop the violence, dismantle the terrorist infrastructure, end the cycle of impunity, and bring the terrorists to justice.

I should be grateful if you would have the contents of the present letter circulated as a document of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17 and 18, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ambassador Daniel **Carmon**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

United Nations S/2008/25

Security Council

Distr.: General
17 January 2008

Original: English

Letter dated 8 January 2008 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities containing an account of the Committee's activities from 1 January to 31 December 2007 (see annex). The report is being submitted in accordance with the note by the President of the Security Council of 29 March 1995 (S/1995/234).

I would appreciate it if the present letter and its annex were brought to the attention of members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Johan **Verbeke**
Chairman
Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities

08-21018 (E) 300108

Annex

Report of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities

I. Introduction

1. The purpose of the present report is to provide a factual summary of the Committee's activities during the period from 1 January to 31 December 2007, in accordance with the transparency measures outlined by the President of the Security Council in his note of 29 March 1995 (S/1995/234). The last annual report of the Committee was submitted on 7 February 2007 (see S/2007/59).

II. Background information

2. Following consultations among the members of the Security Council, the Council agreed to elect the Bureau of the Committee for 2007, which consisted of Ambassador Johan Verbeke (Belgium) as Chairman, with the delegations of Ghana and the Russian Federation providing the two Vice-Chairmen (see S/2007/20). The Committee was guided in the discharge of its mandate by Security Council resolutions 1730 (2006) and 1735 (2006) as well as other relevant resolutions. The Committee also benefited in its work from the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Committee was assisted by the New York-based Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, established pursuant to resolution 1526 (2004), which worked under its direction.

III. Summary of the activities of the Committee

3. During 2007, the Committee continued its proactive approach to discharging its mandate and enhanced its role in the fight against Al-Qaida- and Taliban-related terrorism. One formal meeting and 30 informal meetings were convened during the reporting period. In February and July, the Committee approved its programme of work, based on the requirements outlined in Security Council resolution 1735 (2006) and on the list of pending issues before the Committee. The Committee also agreed to continuously update its programme of work to allow for flexibility and responsiveness in its work. In order to increase the efficiency of its work, the Committee conducted an assessment of the follow-up to its reports to the Council in June and undertook a stocktaking exercise in July to evaluate the implementation of resolutions 1730 (2006) and 1735 (2006).

Revision of the Committee's guidelines

4. Following the adoption of resolutions 1730 (2006) and 1735 (2006) at the end of December 2006, the Committee thoroughly revised its guidelines on 12 February 2007 in order to align them with the two new resolutions. More specifically, the Committee updated the section on de-listing (section 8) in the light of the new provisions introduced in resolution 1730 (2006) with regard to the removal of individuals and entities from sanctions lists. In that resolution, the Council

requested the Secretary-General to establish, within the Secretariat (Security Council Subsidiary Organs Branch), an administrative focal point to receive petitions from listed individuals and entities.[1] The Committee also amended the section on exemptions to the assets freeze (section 9) to bring it in line with paragraph 15 of resolution 1735 (2006), which extended the period for consideration of notifications submitted pursuant to paragraph 1 (a) of resolution 1452 (2002) from 48 hours to three working days.

Committee website

5. The Committee, with the assistance of the Monitoring Team and the Secretariat, has been working on further improving its website[2] in terms of content as well as form. The improvements are aimed at providing information in a user-friendly way, in particular with a view to better assisting Member States in their efforts to implement the relevant Security Council resolutions. New content includes the "Latest news" section, which features information on the most recent developments in the Committee's work, and sections providing information on the procedures related to listing, de-listing and exemptions to sanctions measures. Fact sheets have also been provided to make these procedures better known and to offer greater clarity.

Improvements to the consolidated list and its dissemination

6. The completeness and accuracy of the Committee's consolidated list remain essential for the effectiveness of the sanctions measures. Over the past year, the Committee has striven to further improve the quality of the lists and this endeavour remains high on the Committee's agenda. In total, 23 updates were made in 2007, pertaining to 349 entries.[3] As the consolidated list belongs to the broader membership of the United Nations, the Committee relies greatly on the input and assistance of all States in achieving the objective of maintaining a list of the highest quality possible. In this context it should be noted that the first edition of the review pursuant to paragraph 6 (i) of the Committee's guidelines was concluded in July without any change to the list.

7. As requested by the Council in resolution 1735 (2006), the Committee paid particular attention to the improvement of the Taliban section of the list. Those efforts, which were greatly facilitated by the Monitoring Team, resulted in additional identifiers being introduced in 71 entries in the Taliban section of the list. This means that half of the 142 names of the Taliban individuals currently listed were amended in 2007. The original script of the names of all Taliban individuals was also added to the entries, and, for the first time since 2001, the Committee added one individual to that section. The Committee removed the last remaining entity from the Taliban section.

8. In the Al-Qaida section of the list, the names of seven individuals were added in 2007, and improvements were made to the existing information in 112 out of the section's 337 current entries. The Committee also decided to remove the names of 2 individuals and 12 entities from the Al-Qaida section of the list.

[1] The focal point became operational on 30 March 2007.

[2] http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/index.shtml.

[3] This figure includes entries that were added, removed, amended or otherwise changed.

9. Since the focal point for de-listing became operational, the Committee has received 16 requests (from 4 individuals and 12 entities) through that process. The Committee granted de-listing to one individual and 12 entities and decided to maintain the names of the three other individuals on the list. Of the three de-listing requests submitted in 2007 through the State of residence or citizenship, the Committee has approved one, rejected one and is still considering one.

10. A comprehensive account of listings and de-listings approved in 2007 is attached to the present report (see appendix). Following each update of the list, the Committee issued a press release, circulated a note verbale and e-mailed the changes to the list to Member States. In this connection, e-mails are currently sent to more than 300 contact points provided by Member States and relevant international and regional organizations. In accordance with paragraph 19 of resolution 1526 (2004), the Secretariat also continued to transmit a hard copy of the committee's list on a quarterly basis for the convenience of Member States. During 2007, the list was transmitted three times, in February, June and October (SCA/2/07(2), SCA/2/07(8) and SCA/2/07(22)). Pursuant to paragraph 10 of resolution 1735 (2006), the Secretariat notified, after publication but within two weeks after a name was added to the consolidated list, the Permanent Mission of the country or countries where the individual or entity was believed to be located and, in the case of individuals, the country of which the person was a national (when that information was known) of the listing of the individual or entity. The notification is to remind such State(s) to inform, to the extent possible, and in writing where possible, the individuals and entities on the consolidated list of the measures imposed on them, the reasons for the measures as included in the publicly releasable portion of the statement of case, the Committee's guidelines, the listing and de-listing procedures contained in relevant Security Council resolutions and the provisions of resolution 1452 (2002), as revised by resolution 1735 (2006). The Secretariat included, when available, a copy of the publicly releasable portion of the statement of case with the notification.

11. With regard to the functionality of the consolidated list, the XML format has been provided in addition to the PDF and HTML formats. The Committee anticipates that the new format will enhance and facilitate the incorporation of the list into national watch lists and databases. This technical improvement should also make it easier for banks and other financial institutions, as well as relevant international organizations, to incorporate a searchable version of the list into their databases. All three formats of the list are available on the Committee's website for downloading.

Requests seeking the Committee's confirmation of the identity of certain individuals

12. The Committee received a number of requests from States seeking its assistance in confirming the identity of certain individuals for the purpose of implementing the sanctions, in particular with regard to the assets freeze. The Committee assisted those States by providing them liaison, through its secretariat, with the designating State(s) in case they had more identifying information than what appeared on the Committee's list. The Committee strove to improve this established practice by responding more promptly and efficiently to States seeking its assistance in this regard and continues to consider how it can further improve its responsibilities with regard to providing States with the required information.

Exemptions to sanctions measures

13. During the reporting period, the Committee, mindful that the Council provided for exemptions to the assets freeze, including for humanitarian purposes, continued to consider notifications and requests for exemptions to the assets freeze submitted pursuant to paragraphs 1 (a) and 1 (b) of resolution 1452 (2002). The Committee's secretariat also maintained and regularly updated the list of States that have approached the Committee pursuant to the above-mentioned resolution. In 2007, the Committee received 22 communications from States seeking exemptions to the assets freeze measures. In that connection, no negative decision has been taken by the Committee in respect of 15 notifications under paragraph 1 (a) of resolution 1452 (2002), and 5 requests under paragraph 1 (b) have been approved.

14. The Committee drafted and posted on its website a fact sheet on the general issue of exemptions to the travel ban and provided information regarding exemptions to the travel ban for religious obligations to one Member State.

Committee's position on the recommendations contained in the sixth and seventh reports of the Monitoring Team

15. In 2007, the Committee considered the sixth and seventh reports of the Monitoring Team, submitted pursuant to resolutions 1617 (2005) and 1735 (2006), respectively. In February and March, the Committee, in the presence of experts of the Monitoring Team, considered in depth the recommendations contained in the Team's sixth report, submitted to the Committee on 7 November 2006 (see S/2007/132). The Committee's position on the recommendations contained therein was reflected in its report to the Security Council (S/2007/229, annex) submitted on 24 April 2007. In that report, the Committee identified and commented on those recommendations from which the Committee felt Member States could benefit the most in their implementation of the sanctions measures. In November and December, the Committee considered the Team's seventh report (see S/2007/677) and prepared a report to the Security Council to reflect its position on the recommendations contained in it.

Briefings by the Chairman of the Committee to the Security Council

16. Ambassador Verbeke, together with the Chairmen of the Committees established pursuant to resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1540 (2004), which also deal with terrorism-related issues, gave two joint briefings to the Security Council in 2007, on 22 May (see S/PV.5679) and 14 November (see S/PV.5779). In his statements, given pursuant to paragraph 31 of resolution 1735 (2006), the Chairman informed the Council about the current and future activities of the Committee and the Monitoring Team.

Dialogue with States

17. Pursuant to paragraph 31 of resolution 1735 (2006), in 2007 the Chairman of the Committee gave two briefings that were open to all interested Member States. On 20 July, the Chairman gave a briefing to inform them on the work of the Committee and the Monitoring Team and to present the new Committee website. The question-and-answer session gave all Member States an opportunity to raise questions and to share comments with the Chairman, as well as with the Coordinator of the Monitoring Team and with the focal point for de-listing of the United Nations

Secretariat. In the briefing on 18 December, the Chairman focused on the current work of the Committee and the Monitoring Team with a view to providing more information to Member States on issues of mutual concern. The Coordinator briefly outlined the main findings of the Monitoring Team's seventh report. In connection with this established form of mutually beneficial dialogue, the Chairman strongly encouraged non-members of the Security Council to benefit from the opportunity provided under paragraph 29 of resolution 1735 (2006) to send their representatives to meet with the Committee to discuss any sanctions-related issues.

18. In addition to notes verbales communicating to Member States the updates to the consolidated list, on 31 July the Committee issued a note verbale concerning the consolidated list and another concerning the arms embargo measure. In its note verbale on the consolidated list (SCA/2/07(11)), the Committee recalled that States that had been victims of Al-Qaida-related attacks have the possibility of requesting those identified as responsible to be added to the Committee's consolidated list. In its note verbale on the arms embargo (SCA/2/07(12)), the Committee reminded States of its position on four recommendations pertaining to the arms embargo that were contained in the fifth (see S/2006/750) and sixth (see S/2007/132) reports of the Monitoring Team.

Visits by the Chairman to selected countries

19. Pursuant to paragraph 30 of resolution 1735 (2006), the Chairman undertook two visits to selected States in 2007. The first took him to Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya (30 June-7 July) and the second to Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (26 October-4 November). Oral and written reports were provided to the Committee upon his return. The outcome of the Chairman's visits to Member States was highlighted in his briefing to the Security Council on 14 November (see S/PV.5779) and in two press releases that can be found on the Committee's website (SC/9092 and SC/9182).

20. In his briefing to the Council, the Chairman reported on the value of such visits, as they provide for a unique opportunity to update Member States directly on the latest developments in the work of the Committee and at the same time allow him to listen to the suggestions and concerns of Member States that are on the front line in the implementation of the sanction measures imposed by the Council. The Chairman also noted that, although the commitment of States to address the threat posed by Al-Qaida- and Taliban-related terrorism is quite strong, these States still need to develop a better understanding of all the potential the Al-Qaida and Taliban sanctions regime can offer to assist them in their fight against terrorism.

Coordination with the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and their respective expert groups

21. On numerous occasions, the members of the Committee have highlighted the complementary functions of the three Committees in the fight against international terrorism and the need for a constant exchange of information among them. During the joint briefing to the Security Council on 14 November, Ambassador Verbeke made a joint introductory statement on behalf of the three Chairmen, in which he provided information on the cooperation between the three Committees and the respective expert groups. A concrete example of this cooperation is the common strategy for non- and late-reporting States and its implementation through joint

workshops held in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Dakar and Gaborone in September and November 2007, respectively. The Monitoring Team and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate also made four joint visits in 2007.

Cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization and other international organizations

22. Enhanced cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) continues to provide the Committee with better tools to fulfil its mandate more efficiently and gives States more effective means to implement sanctions measures. In the past year, the Committee further increased its cooperation with INTERPOL. In April, it approved a revised action plan regarding INTERPOL-United Nations Security Council special notices, which established an operational framework for joint notices for entities on the Committee's list, in addition to the existing notices for individuals. All notices are available to national authorities through the Interpol National Central Bureau. Limited versions of the notices are also available to the public on the INTERPOL website.[4]

IV. Monitoring Team

23. The six-monthly programmes of work submitted by the Monitoring Team in January and July were both approved by the Committee. The Monitoring Team, whose mandate was renewed under resolution 1735 (2006) for another 18 months, continued to travel to all regions of the world, visiting 15 States in 2007 (11 on its own and 4 with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate), including a fourth visit to Afghanistan. An expert of the Team also accompanied the Chairman on his two visits to selected States in the past year. The Team maintained close cooperation with international and regional organizations, and visited the offices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Customs Organization, the International Air Transport Association, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, INTERPOL and the European Union. The Team also participated in 33 international and regional conferences, which promoted a better understanding of the work of the Committee, in particular of the sanctions measures themselves, and thereby improved their implementation by Member States.

24. In addition to coordinating travel plans with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the Team made joint visits with it to Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia and Turkey. Such joint visits have helped reduce the confusion on the part of some States regarding the different mandates of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) and the Counter-Terrorism Committee and their respective expert groups.

25. Recognizing the particular need to coordinate its work with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and other relevant bodies in areas where States may feel overburdened by requests for information from the Security Council, the Team developed a common strategy with the Executive Directorate and

[4] http://www.interpol.int/Public/NoticesUN/Default.asp.

the experts who support the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) to address the problems faced by States that are yet to submit reports required by the three Committees. Working with the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime as facilitator, the three expert groups have organized a number of subregional workshops for national officials who are involved in the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions or are responsible for writing reports to the three Committees. The first workshop was held in Dakar in September 2007 for 23 West and Central African States; the second was held in Gaborone in November 2007 for 16 Southern African States; and a third is being planned for the remaining 14 North and East African States. Other aspects of the common strategy include similar proposals for States in Asia and the Pacific and in Latin America and the Caribbean.

26. In addition to its reports on its trips, the Team submitted some 15 papers in response to requests from the Committee. These covered issues such as Member States' reporting strategies; listed individuals believed to have died; exemptions to the travel ban; cooperation with INTERPOL; humanitarian exemptions; possible cases of non-compliance; the views of the private financial sector towards the sanctions regime; the checklist; working with international and regional organizations; the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes; and a table of Member State experiences in implementing the sanctions. The Team also greatly assisted the Committee in enhancing its website.

27. The Team has devoted much effort to improving the consolidated list. It encouraged Member States to submit additional identifiers and other useful information, and as a result was able to submit no fewer than 347 proposed amendments to existing entries on the list, which have so far resulted in 324 changes being approved.

28. At the request of the Council, the Monitoring Team continued to organize regional meetings with the heads and deputy heads of intelligence and security services to discuss how the sanctions regime could be adapted to address changes in the threat posed by Al-Qaida-related terrorism. The Team held three such regional meetings in 2007. It held its fifth meeting for the heads and deputy heads of intelligence and security services from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen in February 2007, and in the same month convened its first regional meeting of five States in South-East Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. In November it held its second regional meeting on Somalia, which was attended by Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan (host country), the United Arab Emirates, the United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen. In February it held its first meeting of financial institutions in the private sector to discuss issues concerning implementation of the assets freeze. Such meetings have proved to be an invaluable way to find out what is happening on the ground and to examine the changes in the threat from Al-Qaida and in its methodology.

29. As mandated under resolutions 1617 (2005) and 1735 (2006), the Monitoring Team submitted two reports to the Committee, in November 2006 and September 2007. Those reports contained many useful suggestions for improving the effectiveness of the sanctions regime and have been thoroughly considered by the Committee, which has reported its own position on the recommendations contained therein to the Security Council.

30. The Monitoring Team has assisted the Committee in achieving progress in its work through high-quality reporting on sanctions implementation on the ground, and constantly provides valuable input to the Committee's work by outlining and analysing issues that the Committee will need to address in the future. The Committee looks forward to the continuation of this highly professional support.

V. Current issues and future work of the Committee

31. The Committee achieved tangible progress in its work during 2007, particularly in improving the quality of the consolidated list and in strengthening its outreach to Member States. The Committee fully realizes that a transparent and frank dialogue between the Committee and Member States is vital for achieving the full implementation of the sanctions measures.

32. The Committee is committed to further improving its procedures with a view to addressing outstanding relevant issues that could further improve sanctions implementation.

33. While recognizing their own responsibility with regard to updating the consolidated list, the members of the Committee encourage all States to continue to submit names of individuals and entities that are associated with Al-Qaida, Osama bin Laden and the Taliban, and to provide additional identifiers for the existing names on the list. States now have a template cover sheet as a guide for listing submissions at their disposal on the Committee's website. The Committee will continue to pay the utmost attention to expanding existing data on the list and relies on assistance from Member States and the Monitoring Team in this regard.

34. Although the Committee believes that the most effective means of dialogue with Member States is direct contacts, including country visits by either the Monitoring Team or the Chairman, States are invited to provide the Committee with information regarding their implementation efforts, and in particular challenges they have encountered, by any other means they deem appropriate. This would allow the Committee to continue developing tools to assist States in the implementation of their obligations under the relevant resolutions.

35. Pursuant to paragraph 21 of resolution 1735 (2006), the Committee has started and will continue its work on the identification of possible cases of non-compliance based on a background paper prepared by the Monitoring Team. The Committee has developed a methodology to identify possible cases of non-compliance, to gather additional information if needed and to take action on specific cases. The Committee also agreed to develop specific and general recommendations derived from this empirical analysis on what could be done to prevent the occurrence of such cases, including by identifying the difficulties faced by States in implementing the sanctions. The overall objective of this exercise is to improve the effectiveness of the sanctions regime. The Committee intends to forward to the Security Council its findings once the discussion in the Committee has been concluded.

36. The Committee has also started an in-depth discussion on how to limit and reduce the number of pending issues. In addition, the Committee will further discuss issues such as the criminal misuse of the Internet and the involvement of banks and financial institutions in the effective implementation of sanctions.

37. The Committee is resolved to further deepen its cooperation with the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), especially through enhanced information-sharing and coordinated country visits. As noted above, the cooperation of the Committee with INTERPOL was strengthened during 2007. The Committee intends to further enhance this cooperation by issuing special notices on listed entities. The Committee is also committed to engaging further with other international and regional organizations and agencies.

VI. Observations and conclusions

38. Al-Qaida and the Taliban, as well as their associates, continue to be one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. Violent terrorist acts undermine stability around the world, and the changing nature of the threat is a matter of growing concern. The Committee, by maintaining, updating and improving its consolidated list of individuals and entities associated with Al-Qaida and the Taliban, and by effectively monitoring the implementation by Member States of the sanctions targeting listed individuals and entities, plays a crucial role in the United Nations counter-terrorism efforts. The Committee is firmly resolved to continuously carry out the responsibilities entrusted to it, in cooperation with Member States.

39. In the fight against terrorism, sanctions offer the international community a powerful tool of deterrence and prevention at the same time. The Committee intends to further consolidate and strengthen, with the assistance of all Member States, what has already been achieved in its work and thus contribute to making the world a more secure place.

Appendix

Additions to and removals from the consolidated list of individuals and entities belonging to or associated with Al-Qaida and the Taliban in 2007

A. Individuals added

Date	*Name*	*Press release*
8 June	Salem Nor Eldin Amohamed al-Dabski (QI.A.231.07.)	SC/9046, 14 June
	Said Youssef Ali Abu Aziza (QI.A.230.07.)	
	Aly Soliman Massoud Abdul Sayed (QI.A.229.07.)	
27 August	Abdelmalek Droukdel (QI.D.232.07.)	SC/9107, 28 August
13 September	Sirajuddin Jallaloudine Haqqani (TI.H.144.07.)	SC/9116, 14 September
9 October	Fahd Muhammad 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Khashiban (QI.A.233.07.)	SC/9140, 11 October
	Abdul Rahim Al-Talhi (QI.A.234.07.)	
	Muhammad 'Abdallah Salih Sughayr (QI.S.235.07.)	

B. Individuals removed

Date	*Name*	*Press release*
17 September	Lokman Amin Mohammed (QI.M.207.05.)	SC/9120, 19 September
14 November	Ahmed Idris Nasreddin (QI.N.66.02.)	SC/9172, 15 November

C. Entities removed

Date	*Name*	*Press release*
1 August	De Afghanistan Momtaz Bank (TE.D.7.00.)	SC/9099, 17 August
14 November	Akida Bank Private Limited (QE.A.74.02.)	SC/9172, 15 November
	Akida Investment Co. Ltd. (QE.A.75.02.)	

Date	*Name*	*Press release*
	Gulf Center S.R.L. (QE.G.77.02.)	
	Miga-Malaysian Swiss, Gulf and African Chamber (QE.M.78.02.)	
	Hotel Nasco (QE.H.80.02.)	
	Nasco Nasreddin Holding A.S. (QE.N.81.02.)	
	Nascoservice S.R.L. (QE.N.82.02.)	
	Nascotex S.A (QE.N.83.02.)	
	Nasreddin Company Nasco Sas Di Ahmed Idris Nasreddin EC (QE.N.84.02.)	
	Nasreddin Foundation (QE.N.85.02.)	
	Nasreddin Group International Holding Limited (QE.N.86.02.)	
	Nasreddin International Group Limited Holding (QE.N.87.02.)	

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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (for the period from 21 August 2007 to 7 January 2008)

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1745 (2007), by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) until 26 February 2008. It covers major developments in Timor-Leste and the implementation of the Mission's mandate since my report of 28 August 2007 (S/2007/513).

2. As of 7 January 2008, UNMIT consisted of a civilian component comprising 341 international staff (123 women), 806 national staff (135 women), 1,480 police officers (77 women) and 33 military liaison and staff officers (all men). My Special Representative, Atul Khare, continued to lead the Mission and to coordinate with all United Nations system actors. He was assisted by two Deputy Special Representatives: Eric Tan Huck Gim for Security Sector Support and Rule of Law (who completed his assignment on 30 November 2007); and Finn Reske-Nielsen for Governance Support, Development and Humanitarian Coordination.

II. Political developments

A. Developments since the inauguration of the new Government

3. The performance of the Parliament, Government and other State institutions in Timor-Leste reflected progress in policy-making and active political debate within democratically-sanctioned arenas. However, persisting differences and lack of cooperation among some political leaders and parties prevented consensus approaches for resolving a number of key issues, including the estimated 100,000 internally displaced persons and the nearly 600 "petitioners" of the Timorese armed forces (Falitil-Forças Armadas de Defesa de Timor-Leste) (see S/2006/628, para. 3, and S/2007/513, para. 9). On 15 September, the Parliament approved the programme (see para. 47 below) of the new Government (formed by the Alliance for a Parliamentary Majority (AMP) led by Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão by a margin of 41 to 23; those voting against included the 21 parliamentarians from the Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste (Fretilin), the party with the largest number of seats, which continued to contest the constitutionality of the Government. Among

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the short-term priorities identified in the programme are improving security, addressing the internally displaced persons situation, and resolving the cases of the petitioners as well as prison escapee and deserting Military Police Commander Alfredo Reinado of the armed forces (see S/2007/50, para. 10). These priorities are also reflected in the transitional budget for the period from July to December 2007 and the 2008 State budget, approved by the Parliament on 9 October and 28 December 2007, respectively.

4. Parliamentary discussions were generally marked by lively and constructive debate among all political parties, including Fretilin, which participated actively in plenary and committee activities, and offered insightful observations and proposals as well as criticisms of the Government programme and budgets. The Prime Minister and other ministers also engaged in important parliamentary debates, making genuine efforts to address concerns raised by parliamentarians. Parliament President Fernando de Araújo led a multiparty delegation to Indonesia to strengthen relations with the Indonesian Parliament, and participated in an Inter-Parliamentary Union meeting in New York. In addition, three women parliamentarians participated in the fifth Asian-Pacific Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference in Beijing.

5. District administrations also responded constructively to the challenges of the immediate post-electoral period, particularly the negative fallout from the 6 August announcement on the formation of the new Government that especially affected Baucau, Lautem and Viqueque districts (see S/2007/513, para. 20). These three district administrations, supported by UNMIT, the national police and the armed forces, as well as international security forces, responded with a series of dialogue initiatives to bring opposing stakeholders together. These efforts were assisted by the Fretilin leadership's public rejection of violence as an expression of political discontent. The impact of these initiatives was visible by the end of September, with all schools and local administrative offices having resumed normal functioning and most newly displaced persons having returned to their homes.

6. Following the President's meeting on 19 August with Alfredo Reinado (S/2007/513, para. 18), a directive council for the dialogue process was established by the Prime Minister on 12 October, chaired by the Secretary of State for Security, to coordinate the dialogue initiative to resolve the case of Reinado and his group. Despite efforts by the Government, negotiations with Reinado have not yet yielded tangible results, and there is still no agreement on such key issues as handover of weapons and cantonment arrangements. On 9 and 22 November, Reinado organized gatherings in Ermera district, each attended by crowds of hundreds, including petitioners, some of whom openly carried long-barrel weapons. During the gatherings and in public remarks, Reinado and the petitioners linked their situations and demanded that they be addressed together, although the Government and the President view them as separate issues. A meeting planned for 16 December between the Prime Minister and Reinado did not take place because Reinado failed to appear. The Government's ultimate goal has continued to be Reinado's voluntary surrender and submission to judicial proceedings. Taking account of its mandated task of maintaining public security, UNMIT maintained its position that, given Reinado's written indication of his willingness to submit to justice (see S/2007/513, para. 18), dialogue is currently the preferable means of pursuing that end.

7. The political situation has continued to be fragile. Fretilin continued to consider the AMP-led Government as unconstitutional, referring to it as a "de facto Government" (see S/2007/513, para. 4). This position was reaffirmed at the Fretilin national retreat held from 25 to 28 October, where the party also reiterated its commitment to support peace and national stability. Fretilin leaders have also called for the Government to step down and for early elections to be held in 2009, as conveyed to the Security Council mission (see S/2007/711, para. 5) and myself during recent visits to the country. Despite complaints by some of its members in Parliament of lack of consultation, the Government coalition has maintained its solidarity in votes on major issues.

8. During much of the past year, a primary focus of both the Timorese authorities and UNMIT was on the peaceful conduct of elections. Over the months since elections, there have been increasingly high expectations among the population that the Government will fulfil campaign promises and demonstrate its ability to implement lasting solutions to the numerous challenges facing the country, including widespread poverty and unemployment and other socio-economic problems. While the programme and budgets developed by the Government and constructively debated in Parliament reflect commitment to assume responsibilities, the Government will now need to harness and strengthen capacities to implement budgeted activities, for which assistance will continue to be required. In going forward, it is important for all parties to acknowledge that political differences should not preclude cooperation in resolving pressing issues and supporting the State-building process in order to promote the greater interests of Timor-Leste. At this critical juncture, increased national consensus and sustained international support are essential to consolidate the gains of the past year and ensure that a culture of democracy and good governance is fostered in Timor-Leste.

B. Support for dialogue and reconciliation

9. My Special Representative continued to emphasize the need to address critical political and security-related issues through inclusive and collaborative processes in his separate weekly meetings with the President and the Prime Minister and his regular meetings with the Parliament President. Since the formation of the new Government, my Special Representative, in supporting a meaningful and constructive role for the opposition, also held weekly meetings with the Secretary-General of Fretilin, former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri. In addition, he held monthly meetings with representatives of civil society. The immediate post-crisis problems facing Timor-Leste — such as the internally displaced persons, petitioners and the fugitive Reinado — are among the regular topics of discussions. In these forums, my Special Representative has continued to urge the Timorese leadership and other stakeholders to pursue peaceful dialogue and to avoid violent means to resolve differences.

10. As at 7 January 2008, 16 meetings of the High-level Coordination Committee and 13 meetings of the Trilateral Coordination Forum had been held (see S/2007/50, paras. 7 and 40, and S/2007/513, paras. 5 and 27). They continue to be valuable forums for collaboration and consensus-building between UNMIT and the Government on security and other key issues facing the country. UNMIT also continued its monthly meetings (now 10) with the leaders of all political parties, including those without parliamentary representation. These provided important

opportunities for parties to discuss issues of concern and to hold each other accountable to commitments embodied in the political party accord, including adhering to principles of good governance, ensuring a meaningful and constructive role for the opposition and civil society, guaranteeing not to politicize State institutions such as the armed forces, the national police and the public administration, and condemning all forms of violence. Women's non-governmental organizations continued to play an important role in promoting dialogue and reconciliation among both women and men, including through the 16 days of activism against gender violence campaign and the national workshop on involving men in ending violence against women. The United Nations system is also supporting the Government's new national recovery strategy, which focuses on community dialogue as one of its five priorities (see para. 52).

11. District administration personnel and the national police, supported by UNMIT police, initiated a series of dialogues in the eastern districts after the violence there in August 2007 (see para. 5). President José Ramos-Horta supported these reconciliation efforts through visits to Uatolari subdistrict in Viqueque on 23 October and to Lautem and Baucau districts from 5 to 8 November. The President again visited Baucau and Viqueque districts, from 18 to 21 December. UNMIT provided support for these efforts through visits by my Special Representative to Baucau and Viqueque districts, and by facilitating dialogue between political parties in districts that faced security problems (including Baucau and Ermera).

12. During a number of high-level visits, the international community conveyed its sustained commitment to Timor-Leste, while emphasizing the need for enhanced dialogue and reconciliation among political leaders and parties in order to collaborate in addressing the challenges facing the country. The President made visits to Portugal and Singapore, and several high-level delegations visited Timor-Leste. A Security Council mission visited Timor-Leste for the first time since the restoration of its independence, from 24 to 30 November, and, in its report (S/2007/711) highlighted key concerns and issues facing the country. The mission urged the Timorese political leaders to work together to tackle those issues in a coordinated way in the national interest, and stressed the need for continued dialogue at the national and community levels to foster greater political consensus and defuse existing tensions. Similar appeals were made during visits of the President of the European Commission, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, the Minister of Finance of Norway and the Secretary of State for Cooperation and Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of State for Defence of Portugal. During visits of my Special Representative to European Union institutions in Brussels and Strasbourg and to Japan and the United States of America, discussions underlined the need for sustained international support to strengthen State institutions and the rule of law, and to help build a culture of democratic governance, in order to resolve the problems confronting this young country.

13. I had the pleasure of visiting Timor-Leste on 14 and 15 December to convey to the Government and population that the United Nations remained fully committed to efforts to bring sustainable peace and stability, rule of law, democratic governance and socio-economic development to the country. While I commended the Timorese people for making significant advances over the past year, including the peaceful conduct of elections, I made a strong appeal to the leadership and other interlocutors

to confront the serious challenges still faced in a unified manner. I emphasized that a number of the root causes of the crisis had not been fully addressed, including political divisions, weak institutions (particularly the security forces) and widespread poverty and unemployment, which is especially high among the youth. I also expressed concern that the country had not resolved some grave issues remaining from the crisis which continue to contribute to a volatile security situation, such as the internally displaced persons, petitioners and the fugitive Reinado. I thus appealed to the Timorese leadership, political parties and civil society to intensify efforts towards national dialogue and reconciliation in order to bridge divides and tackle the country's many challenges in a coordinated way to promote national interests. At this critical juncture, I emphasized the need for all Timorese to work closely together — including the Government and Fretilin — to address priority needs and maintain stability and to strengthen democratic governance and respect for the rule of law.

14. I was encouraged that the Timorese leaders and other interlocutors focused on the urgent need to improve security conditions as well as to enhance dialogue among the political leadership in order to collectively address the country's short- and long-term challenges. Timorese interlocutors, including Fretilin, expressed appreciation for the good offices efforts of UNMIT, but appealed for further assistance to enhance dialogue among the leadership in order to facilitate consensus approaches for addressing the country's problems, including those relating to internally displaced persons, petitioners and Reinado. I have asked my Special Representative, in consultation with the Timorese leadership, to consider additional measures to facilitate inclusive approaches for addressing these pressing problems, taking into account the fact that on 14 December Fretilin sent a letter to me with some proposals, as well as the efforts of the President and the Prime Minister to engage with Fretilin and others in resolving these problems.

C. Support for capacity-building for electoral institutions and processes

15. Following the successful conduct of the 2007 elections, the country's leaders have stressed the need to strengthen the basic infrastructure and capacity of the electoral institutions and to review the legal framework for elections. The National Electoral Commission and the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration developed their medium- and long-term strategic plans with United Nations assistance. The UNMIT electoral team, together with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) experts, assisted these institutions and the Government-led Committee for the Revision of the Electoral Laws in training and ongoing efforts to reform the electoral framework. UNMIT and UNDP also supported the electoral institutions in organizing an operational-level coordination meeting with donor countries and international non-governmental organizations. In addition, to support efforts to enhance the role of women in the country's electoral processes, UNMIT organized a workshop to discuss relevant United Nations guidelines.

III. Restoration and maintenance of public security

A. Security developments

16. With the completion of the elections and the departure of the fifth formed police unit from Portugal dedicated to electoral security, UNMIT police strength decreased from 1,641 at the end of July to 1,480 (77 women) by 7 January 2008. Of these, 886 officers (including 139 in the Malaysian formed police unit, 141 in the Portuguese formed police unit, and 30 in the Pakistani formed police unit) were deployed in Dili and 594 to other districts (including 140 in the Bangladeshi formed police unit (114 in Baucau and 26 in Viqueque) and 109 in the Pakistani formed police unit (79 in Bobonaro and 30 in Covalima)). UNMIT police continued to perform the mandated task of interim law enforcement, while also substantially increasing efforts to support the training, institutional development and strengthening of the national police (also see para. 25).

17. After the outbreak of violence in the eastern districts in August (see S/2007/513, para. 20), the overall security situation throughout the country improved, with no major security incidents or spikes in violence occurring. The incidence of serious crimes such as murder, abduction and rape also decreased, from about nine per month during the previous reporting period to about five in the current period. This positive trend is due in large part to the strategic approaches adopted by the UNMIT police and the national police of improved information gathering, targeted patrolling of problem areas and community policing to prevent crimes, with special attention given to areas identified as particularly volatile. For example, from 21 to 24 November, following information received locally, the UNMIT police, working alongside national police officers and assisted by the international security forces, successfully conducted a weapons recovery operation in Dili's troublesome Bairo Pite area. Recovered weapons included bows and arrows, machetes, slingshots, knives, spears and homemade guns. The good cooperation between the police and local community officials was essential to the success of this effort.

18. The good offices and dialogue efforts of the national leadership and UNMIT also contributed significantly to the improvement of the security situation (see paras. 9 and 10), as did the rejection of violence by the Fretilin leadership. The incidence of daily public disturbances has been reduced by about one third during this reporting period, although they continue to pose a problem for maintaining public security, especially in Dili. Many of these disturbances involve incidents such as rock-throwing and assaults related to youth groups fighting amongst themselves or targeting others. There could be a rise in such security incidents should the situation in the internally displaced person camps deteriorate with the onset of the rainy season.

19. UNMIT contributed to the ongoing good cooperation between border agencies of Timor-Leste and Indonesia, principally through the facilitation efforts of its military liaison officers. These officers also continued to facilitate close collaboration between UNMIT and the international security forces as well as the Timorese armed forces.

20. The positive impact of police efforts in reducing the rate of serious crimes, on the one hand, and the still daily occurrence of public disturbances related to youth

group fighting, on the other, reflect the need for a continued strong UNMIT police presence (including the four formed police units) to maintain stability until the national police develops adequate capacities. To this end, UNMIT police will increasingly shift the focus of its efforts to the reform and rebuilding of the national police. In the meantime, UNMIT police will continue to assume the important role of interim law enforcement to ensure stability. As the security situation is still fragile, there remains the possibility of spikes in violence, particularly in connection with unresolved issues relating to Reinado and the petitioners. Fretilin's continued pronouncements that the Government is unconstitutional further contributes to general apprehension and uncertainties among some elements of the population regarding the security environment. Strengthened advocacy and civic education programmes to reduce the occurrence of violence by youth and martial arts groups, as well as gender-based violence, are vital.

B. Support and institutional strengthening of the security institutions

21. The registration, screening and certification programme for the national police proceeded in accordance with the policing arrangement concluded by the Government and UNMIT in December 2006 (see S/2007/50, para. 33, and S/2007/513, para. 25). On 1 December 2007, the registration of all officers was completed, except for 88 who failed to register and are no longer considered part of the police service. All 3,108 registered officers (570 women) had completed the screening process as at 7 January 2008. Of the 3,108 screened officers, 186 (42 women) successfully completed both the provisional certification course and the six-month mentoring process and became fully certified officers. Another 1,503 (271 women) are provisionally certified (having passed the provisional certification course) and are in the mentoring stage. On the other hand, 296 (22 women) require further investigation due to allegations of criminal acts or human rights violations which will be adjudicated by the Timorese-led police evaluation panel. The remaining 1,123 screened officers are either undertaking, or waiting to take, the provisional certification course. As adequate training facilities were not available in some locations, UNMIT established mobile teams to provide the provisional certification course; instruction has been completed in Ermera and Manatuto districts and will be in Liquiça and Baucau districts by the end of January. To expedite instruction for officers in the remaining districts, UNMIT is discussing with the Government whether these mobile teams should be enhanced.

22. During recent months, UNMIT encountered increasing challenges to the mentoring process for the national police. Some police officers, especially in the districts, have resisted supervision and mentoring by UNMIT police as they consider themselves ready to assume increased operational responsibilities, although the majority of officers have been cooperative and are willing to undergo all requirements of the certification process. Further, a number of Timorese leaders, including the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Security and the General Commander Designate of the national police, have publicly raised concerns regarding the pace of the certification process and have appealed for increased operational tasks to be given to national police officers as well as accelerated handover of policing responsibilities in the districts. In addition, some concerns have been raised regarding the inadequate number of UNMIT police with appropriate training skill sets.

23. There are also various factors that have an impact on the ability of UNMIT police to conduct mentoring. The relatively low number of UNMIT police officers deployed in the districts, particularly in remote areas, makes mentoring there more difficult than in Dili. The high turnover of UNMIT police officers through rotation further affects mentoring efforts, although comprehensive mentoring guidelines have been developed for uniformity in approach. Also, given the focus on the task of maintaining security during the elections, most police officers deployed to UNMIT had operational, rather than training and mentoring, experience. Efforts are being made to enhance UNMIT police capacities to provide training and mentoring for the national police, including through an augmented training-of-trainers approach and by requesting contributing countries to deploy more officers with specialized training and mentoring skills. In addition, an independent ongoing evaluation of the Vulnerable Persons Unit of the national police, supported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), has highlighted the need for deploying additional officers to UNMIT with training and experience in dealing with gender-based crimes, particularly given the Unit's critical role in protecting women and children who continue to bear the brunt of the violence. Of course, further efforts are needed to address gender-based violence at all levels, including through training of all national police and UNMIT police officers on the special needs of women and investigative techniques for gender-based crimes as well as through improving victim access to judicial recourse.

24. The rebuilding of the national police as an impartial, professional and reliable police service, with sustainable systems and processes, is a long-term undertaking. The current stringent standards for certification must not be lowered. The fact that, since 1 January 2007, there have been 234 cases of misconduct among the 3,108 screened police officers highlights the need for continued close mentoring and guidance from UNMIT police. It is encouraging, though, that all 186 fully certified national police officers have been considered to perform well and that none have been involved in misconduct to date.

25. In view of progress in the registration, screening and training of national police officers, UNMIT has started to discuss with the Government the process of the phased transfer of law enforcement responsibility to the national police, although there are particular concerns regarding its still weak logistical capabilities (including lack of sufficient facilities, vehicles and communication equipment). In accordance with the policing arrangement, and the reform, restructuring and rebuilding plan being negotiated with the Government, the schedule for handover depends on the status of (a) the certification programme; (b) the achievement of benchmarks and performance targets set out in the reform, restructuring and rebuilding plan; and (c) the security situation. Taking account of these factors, a phased handover of districts and/or special police units is projected to begin in April 2008, with the Rapid Intervention Unit likely to be the first unit to be declared fully operational. Thereafter, depending on progress, it is envisaged that handover could proceed at the rate of one district every two months, starting with Dili district. The schedule will also take account of the outcome of a "pilot handover" of three police substations in Dili to commence in January 2008. However, some UNMIT police officers will be required to remain in handed-over districts in order to provide continuing advice and support to the national police officers and to liaise with and report to UNMIT police headquarters in Dili.

26. The armed forces also made valuable contributions to public security by assisting the UNMIT police and the national police in the maintenance of law and order in the eastern districts during and after the August 2007 unrest, and by maintaining static security at some key installations in Dili. Nevertheless, in some instances, Timorese soldiers assuming static security tasks fired warning shots in violation of the rules of engagement, and occasional disputes emerged between individual military and police members. The armed forces command was responsive when UNMIT raised concerns regarding these incidents. However, their occurrence highlights the need to further improve relations between the security forces as well as to strengthen institutional policies and procedures appropriate for a military force in a peacetime setting, as part of a holistic approach to security sector reform. In order to help address some of these concerns, in December UNMIT initiated training for armed forces personnel on national and international human rights standards, principles regarding the use of force, and command responsibility to ensure respect for human rights standards. The joint national police/armed forces parades and collaboration on activities to celebrate independence day on 28 November reflect continuing efforts to institutionalize cooperative relations between the Timorese armed forces and police service.

C. Comprehensive review of the security sector

27. There are also broader challenges to be addressed in the security sector as a whole, including the need to improve inter-operationability between the security institutions, increase operational capabilities, strengthen legal frameworks, and enhance civilian oversight mechanisms, all of which will be further considered during the ongoing security sector review process. The process started in December 2006 in the context of the Security Sector Review Joint Working Group co-chaired by senior representatives of relevant ministries and UNMIT (see S/2007/50, para. 38, and S/2007/513, para. 28). Since the 2007 elections, the President, with the agreement of the Government, has taken a proactive role in the security sector review process within the framework of a three-tier coordination structure established in August, which is jointly led by the President, the Parliament President and the Prime Minister.

28. UNMIT continues to be fully involved with this coordination mechanism to support the review process, including through the provision of policy advice and technical assistance. UNMIT began preparations for a Government-led country-wide survey to ascertain the views of the Timorese population on the security sector, which is financially supported by the Government of Norway through UNDP. UNMIT also continued to foster the involvement of relevant national stakeholders, such as the Parliament, civil society, the church and academia, in the review process. Security sector reform issues are also among the topics regularly discussed in my Special Representative's meetings with the Timorese leadership and opposition as well as in the High-level Coordination Committee meetings.

IV. Promotion of human rights and the administration of justice

A. Support for the monitoring, promotion and protection of human rights

29. In November, UNMIT released a report on human rights developments in Timor-Leste covering the period from August 2006 to August 2007. The report noted that the citizens of Timor-Leste enjoyed a range of fundamental human rights, including freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and freedom of religion. The report also highlighted that, since August 2006, important progress in the promotion and protection of human rights had been achieved in a number of areas, including the holding of peaceful elections widely regarded as free and fair, strengthening of capacities in the judicial system, initiation of judicial processes relating to crimes committed during the 2006 crisis, and expanded monitoring and investigative activities of the Provedoria for Human Rights and Justice. However, the report also emphasized that considerable challenges remained to be addressed to ensure the safeguarding of human rights, including, inter alia, ensuring adequate standards of living (e.g., housing, basic services and employment), combating domestic and gender-based violence, and creating conditions for the voluntary and peaceful return of internally displaced persons. The need for increased access to justice and protection of the population in the districts, and for strengthened accountability for cases of misconduct among the security forces, was also highlighted. The report also presented a set of recommendations aimed at assisting both Timorese institutions and civil society in strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights in the country.

30. Despite serious resource constraints of the judicial system, notable progress was made in establishing accountability for serious criminal offences committed during the 2006 crisis, in line with the recommendations of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry report (see S/2007/50, paras. 18-24). On 29 November 2007, four soldiers were found guilty of involvement in the shooting deaths of eight national police officers on 25 May 2006. On 3 October, Vicente da Conçeição, also known as "Rai Los", was arrested by UNMIT police with support from the international security forces, pursuant to an arrest warrant issued by the Dili District Court for his alleged involvement in an armed confrontation with members of the armed forces on 24 and 25 May 2006 that resulted in nine persons killed. In another important development, fugitive Reinado and 16 others were indicted for manslaughter, attempted manslaughter, rebellion and weapon charges, with the trial scheduled for 24 January 2008.

31. The trials held thus far, including those of the former Minister of the Interior and the former national police deputy commander of Dili district in the first half of 2007 (see S/2007/513, para. 30), were important signals to the population that Timor-Leste is committed to applying the law in an impartial manner and to combating impunity. Cooperation from the national police and armed forces during these proceedings has been positive, including the public acceptance by the armed forces Commander of the 29 November guilty verdict against the four Timorese soldiers.

32. In conjunction with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Office of the Secretary of State for Promotion of Equality launched the 16 days of activism against gender violence campaign, supported by

the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The campaign culminated on Human Rights Day on 10 December. Following a submission by the United Nations country team to the UNDP Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund, a three-year project of $5.9 million on supporting gender equality and women's human rights in nation-building of Timor-Leste was approved, to be jointly implemented by UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, IOM and UNIFEM. The project will aim to reduce violence against women by addressing issues relating to sexual violence and abuse and to ensure protection, the legal means to fight abuse and access by victims to the justice system. In addition, in November, the Government and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) signed a technical cooperation project for 2008-2009 aimed at strengthening the capacity of State institutions and civil society to promote and protect human rights, including those of women.

33. As a positive development, there are increasing indications that the Parliament will discuss "Chega!", the final report of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation of Timor-Leste submitted in October 2005. Constructive debate on follow-up to the report's recommendations would indicate Parliament's commitment to fostering justice. The last two rounds of hearings of the Timor-Leste-Indonesia Commission of Truth and Friendship were held in September and October 2007 in Dili and Jakarta, respectively. The final report of the Commission is due in February 2008.

34. UNMIT continues to give high priority to its zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse as well as the need for all personnel to maintain the highest standards of integrity and discipline. In addition to providing induction and regular training for all United Nations personnel on the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment in the workplace, UNMIT began special training sessions for national staff to ensure that they are fully aware of their rights and duties. All UNMIT police officers received training in the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and in other conduct and discipline issues immediately upon arrival in the Mission. UNMIT also conducted monthly reviews of off-limit locations. These efforts have resulted in a decrease in the number of conduct and discipline cases. During the reporting period, three alleged sexual exploitation and abuse cases were reported. Two cases involved allegations against UNMIT police officers, which investigations found to be unsubstantiated. The investigation of the third case involving an international civilian staff member is ongoing.

35. UNMIT also strengthened its HIV/AIDS awareness programme. An HIV/AIDS session is included in the Mission's induction course, in which 1,010 personnel had participated as at 7 January 2008. Of the 15 UNMIT-trained peer educators, 8 are women. UNMIT also installed 78 condom dispensers at various United Nations facilities. In November, voluntary testing and counselling became available for United Nations personnel.

B. Support for capacity-building and strengthening of the justice sector

36. The new Government has focused renewed attention on the need to strengthen the justice system, including through accelerating the permanent deployment of judiciary staff to the districts, where permanent courts now function in Baucau, Covalima and Oecussi. This deployment, supported by UNDP, contributes to better access by the population to the justice system. Moreover, the 2008 budget includes a significant increase in the allocation for the justice sector. The Minister of Justice requested UNMIT assistance in drafting a legal framework to formalize traditional justice mechanisms, that remain outside the formal justice system. The Government is also preparing other key legislation, including on domestic violence and witness protection, with technical assistance from UNMIT, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNDP. A number of United Nations partners, including UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, OHCHR and UNMIT, supported the preparation of the Government's first report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which is awaiting Government approval.

37. An independent midterm evaluation mission (of international and national experts) conducted a comprehensive assessment of the UNDP justice sector support programme in order to measure progress in strengthening capacities of national judicial institutions since early 2006. In its report, the mission recommended that the involvement of national judiciary staff be further strengthened, and that international actors gradually relinquish line functions to concentrate on training and mentoring, which was fully endorsed by UNMIT and UNDP. The mission also highlighted the continued need for the support of the international community to the justice sector given its resource constraints and the backlog of cases. It is encouraging that national judges are increasingly responsible for cases, as seen in the Dili District Court where national judges decided 151 criminal cases, compared with 146 decided by international judges over the period from January to December 2007. A second group of 12 Timorese judicial personnel graduated from the Legal Training Centre at the end of 2007, joining the 27 national judges, prosecutors and public defenders who graduated in June (see S/2007/513, para. 35).

38. Gender-based violence continues to be an issue of serious concern, which warrants increased attention and support by national stakeholders and international partners alike. UNIFEM undertook a baseline study on the prevalence of and attitudes towards sexual and gender-based violence, which will serve as the basis for identifying appropriate community-level support required by women to prevent such violence and to respond to the needs of victims. UNFPA, together with the Office for Promotion of Equality, strenuously advocated for approval of the draft domestic violence law, which has been harmonized with the new Penal Code. To promote access to justice through the dissemination of legal information, UNMIT and UNDP organized several public meetings on justice-related issues in the districts in October.

39. The new Government also focused its attention on strengthening the prisons system (see S/2007/513, para. 38). Gradual but steady progress is being made in the corrections sector with the joint support of UNMIT and UNDP. A strategic plan has been approved by the Minister of Justice. The refurbishment of Becora Prison has been substantially completed, and that of Gleno Prison will commence in early 2008. The Minister of Justice has signed a memorandum of understanding with the

Government of Brazil for the initiation of a vocational training programme at Becora Prison to develop the trade skills of inmates, as well as the establishment of a vocational training centre which will, among other things, train prison staff as workshop trainers.

40. Efforts continued to consolidate and strengthen national mechanisms for human rights protection and the promotion of justice. UNMIT, in collaboration with OHCHR, assisted the Provedoria for Human Rights and Justice in establishing an advisory council comprised of representatives of diverse groups, including religious communities, women, handicapped persons and businesses. This facilitated the admission of the Office of the Provedoria to the Asia-Pacific Forum for National Human Rights Institutions in September 2007. The Office of the Provedoria organized a human rights monitoring mission to Viqueque subdistricts, and also presented a monitoring analysis with recommendations for improving conditions in police detention centres in Dili. UNMIT provided technical assistance to non-governmental organizations to improve their ability to make effective use of a database of alleged human rights violations established and managed by a non-governmental organization in 2005. In December 2007, a manual (in the Tetum language) on monitoring economic, social and cultural rights in Timor-Leste was launched by UNMIT, designed to assist civil society and other national actors.

41. Given the importance of ensuring that staff of the Office of the Provedoria possess sufficient skills to deal with human rights complaints, UNDP and OHCHR prioritized investigation skills in their joint project on human rights capacity-building of the Provedoria. Regular training sessions were delivered to the Office of the Provedoria in the areas of investigation skills and constitutional and criminal procedures, with technical assistance provided by the World Bank. UNIFEM also conducted training on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women for the Office of the Provedoria. This assistance has been instrumental in preventing any backlog of cases in the Office of the Provedoria and sustaining the population's trust in the institution through the timely conclusion of investigations. In collaboration with the National Institute of Public Administration, UNIFEM supported the integration of modules on the Convention in the course curricula for civil servants. Under a memorandum of understanding between the Government of Timor-Leste and the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine of Australia for the investigation of the Santa Cruz massacre of 12 November 1991, forensic training will also be provided to 10 national police officers, with the support of UNMIT police officers with forensic expertise.

42. Based on consultations, it is expected that UNMIT and the Government of Timor-Leste will soon sign an agreement concerning assistance to the Office of the Prosecutor-General of Timor-Leste to complete outstanding investigations of the former Serious Crimes Unit. With this agreement, the UNMIT serious crimes investigation team will gain access to the former Serious Crimes Unit archives and databases. UNMIT has started preparing plans to conduct investigations in an organized and effective manner.

V. Support for the "compact", democratic governance, socio-economic development and humanitarian assistance

A. Support for the "compact" process

43. The Government has concluded intensive consultations on a draft "compact" document, with more than 1,000 national and international stakeholders taking part in different dialogue forums. Based on the feedback given, a series of recommended short-, medium- and long-term actions and strategies were proposed in each of the six priority areas (see S/2007/513, para. 40). They form the basis of the compact operational framework, which essentially serves as a resource-coordination tool that also identifies gaps where additional international assistance may be needed. The United Nations country team included the compact as a basis for formulating the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2009-2013. On 31 October, the Council of Ministers endorsed the compact, which is expected to be launched at an international development partners' meeting in early 2008.

B. Enhancing democratic governance

44. Efforts by UNMIT and the United Nations country team as well as development partners continued to support the four organs of sovereignty (presidency, parliament, executive and judiciary), civil society and the media to foster a culture of democratic governance. With the aim of strengthening the country's system of checks and balances, UNDP continued to provide support to the Office of the President to increase its effectiveness, including through the development of processes to improve its agenda management and coordination and communications capacities. In October, UNMIT and UNDP undertook a joint organizational analysis mission to support the Office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Advice was provided to the Parliament by UNMIT and through the UNDP parliament support project, which deployed four legal advisers who helped the new parliamentarians during critical legislative processes, including those leading to approval of the Government programme and the 2007 transitional and 2008 State budgets. UNDP and the United Nations Capital Development Fund continued to support Government strategies for local governance, including the completion of national consultations on the reorganization of administrative structures. In addition, UNIFEM and UNDP, in collaboration with the Parliament, provided assistance to finalize plans for the establishment of a gender resource centre at the Parliament aimed at providing substantive support to the efforts of women parliamentarians, particularly to pursue issues to further women's empowerment and gender equality.

45. To promote responsible citizen involvement in and understanding of governance processes, UNMIT worked closely with UNDP in training-of-trainers sessions with 13 civic education groups throughout the country. The training covered such issues as the role of State institutions and citizens' rights and responsibilities. UNDP is also supporting a programme of dialogue between local non-governmental organizations and Government officials in five districts. In addition, UNDP and UNMIT provided assistance to the one existing national radio and television station as well as 15 community radio stations to strengthen their

technical capacities and reach, including through programming and logistical support, leading to all becoming fully operational.

46. Support continued to be provided to political parties through three UNDP-supported district resource centres in Baucau, Bobonaro and Oecussi. UNDP also initiated a training and capacity-building programme focused on strengthening the institutional capacities of political parties, and their understanding of party roles and responsibilities in a democratic system. UNIFEM, in collaboration with Forum Tau Matan and the National Directorate for Public Administration of the Ministry of State Administration, conducted workshops on Timor-Leste's Constitution with women representatives in village councils.

C. Socio-economic development

47. In its programme, the Government indicated its commitment to promoting development and tackling poverty and other socio-economic concerns, including unemployment, which continue to be major causes of instability in Timor-Leste. The programme's longer-term priority areas are: (a) economic growth; (b) reform of State management; (c) qualification of the youth and development of national human resources; (d) solidarity, health and social protection; (e) infrastructure and improvement of the quality of life; (f) promotion of equality and tolerance, and of internal security, and strengthening of democracy; and (g) national defence and foreign policy. The 2008 budget of about $348 million reflects these priorities, as well as those of the compact. United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, together with the international financial institutions, worked closely with ministries in support of the budget preparation process; a training session on gender-responsive budgeting was also sponsored by UNIFEM and UNMIT for women parliamentarians and representatives of non-governmental organizations. United Nations agencies are also providing support to the Government in the preparation of the second national development plan. In addition, preparation of the 2009-2013 United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Timor-Leste began in collaboration with the Government, non-governmental organizations, donor partners and the international financial institutions. From initial consultations, priorities have emerged in the areas of democratic governance, sustainable growth and basic social services, together with the need to address cross-cutting requirements relating to gender, youth, capacity development and human rights.

48. In support of recovery efforts and the Government priority on human resource development, UNDP and the International Labour Organization (ILO) supported capacity development for the Secretariat of State for Vocational Training and Employment to enhance employment opportunities for young people in Timor-Leste. Labour-intensive techniques were introduced, piloted and incorporated into the design and implementation of public works in all districts. UNFPA provided technical, financial and logistical support to the Ministry of Health in its efforts to increase the capacities of health workers at the district level, specifically for family planning and basic emergency obstetric care. About 210 health workers throughout all districts were trained to provide reproductive health services to the population.

49. As another Government priority area, the improvement of rural livelihoods is a key focus of support by United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. To enhance food security, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

(FAO) initiated the distribution of high-yield maize seeds to 21,000 rural households affected by civil unrest, drought and/or local locust infestation. The World Health Organization (WHO) and FAO also provided technical assistance to the Government for the development of a project for the prevention and control of avian flu, focusing on awareness-raising at the district level, with support from the Governments of Australia and the United States of America. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria approved two projects for the control of malaria, totalling US$ 6 million and $7 million, respectively.

D. Humanitarian assistance

50. About one tenth of the population (100,000 persons) remains displaced — 30,000 in Dili and 70,000 in the districts — and lives in poor conditions in camps or with host families. Key ministries, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations undertook joint efforts to map the needs, capacities and contingency stocks available in preparation for the rainy season and a possible emergency flood situation. At 7 January 2008, approximately 1,700 tents had been replaced and 4,500 tarpaulins distributed in 31 internally displaced persons camps in Dili. Preparations are ongoing, including elevating tents, securing septic tanks, cleaning public drainage and distributing tarpaulins. Vice Prime Minister José Luís Guterres and my Deputy Special Representative Reske-Nielsen convened a high-level meeting on rainy season preparedness on 14 November, which included representatives of ministries, United Nations partners, UNMIT and other international organizations. Support was also provided by UNMIT and humanitarian partners to the Government to improve the existing contingency plan for country-wide disaster preparedness and emergency response. In addition, UNMIT undertook multimedia campaigns in support of humanitarian efforts, and two mobile teams distributed updated information for 147 message boards in internally displaced persons camps around the country.

51. The World Food Programme (WFP) undertook an emergency food security assessment in Dili aimed at ascertaining the number of food-insecure people in internally displaced persons camps and among the non-internally displaced persons population, so that options could then be identified to help restore longer-term food security. The assessment revealed that 50 per cent of current recipients of food distributed in internally displaced persons camps are not food insecure, and that 50 per cent of the surveyed population in Dili is food insecure and in need of assistance. As modalities are being developed to phase out food assistance to non-food insecure internally displaced persons, the Government and United Nations agencies are identifying programmes to assist food-insecure people (including among internally displaced persons and the general population in Dili) in order to restore food security to them. Some of those programmes, however, may require the continuation of food distribution for a short period of time. Continued assistance was also provided to displaced women and children by other United Nations country team partners, including UNICEF and UNFPA.

52. To ensure effective coordination of humanitarian activities, a newly established Humanitarian Coordination Committee, chaired by the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, brought together representatives of United Nations partners, non-governmental organizations and international organizations. The Committee and the Integrated Humanitarian Coordination Team (comprising staff of

UNMIT and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), regularly interacted with Government representatives to assist with the formulation of a national recovery plan and to ensure linkages with international assistance projects. On 9 October, a high-level retreat brought together senior Government officials, UNMIT, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and international organizations to address immediate humanitarian needs. The Council of Ministers adopted a national recovery strategy which was launched on 17 December. United Nations partners also continued to provide support for longer-term efforts in a number of critical areas, including for strengthening the legal framework for land and property rights; developing durable solutions to the housing crisis; community reconciliation; compensation packages for the return and reintegration of internally displaced persons; and livelihood programmes to improve opportunities for vulnerable groups. The UNICEF development of materials for child protection focal points and support teams within internally displaced persons camps and communities led to better access to information on child safety and protection issues and enhanced child protection activities. Psychosocial services and conflict-resolution initiatives were also implemented, which contributed to bringing an increased sense of normalcy in the daily lives of children.

VI. Financial aspects

53. The General Assembly, by its resolution 61/249 C, appropriated $160.6 million for UNMIT for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008. Should the Security Council approve my recommendation for a one-year extension of the UNMIT mandate (see para. 56), the cost of the operation and maintenance of the Mission during this period will be limited to resources approved by the General Assembly. As at 30 September 2007, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNMIT amounted to $82.7 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to $2,785.7 million. In accordance with the quarterly payment schedule, reimbursement of formed police unit costs has been made for the period up to 31 August 2007, while payments for equipment owned by formed police units covered the period up to 30 September 2007.

VII. Observations

54. **The functioning of the Parliament, Government and other State institutions demonstrates progress in building on the gains of the peaceful electoral process as well as a commitment to restore normalcy following the 2006 crisis. However, the first year of the new Government and Parliament remains a delicate time for the country. The population has high expectations for tangible improvements in the quality of their daily lives, still marked by widespread poverty and unemployment. While the approval of the Government programme and budgets are important first steps towards fulfilling campaign promises, implementation will now be critical. State institutions will need to strengthen capacities, systems and procedures to effectively carry out planned strategies and activities, which will require continued international assistance.**

55. Despite an improvement of the overall security situation throughout the country and other advances, Timor-Leste continues to face enormous challenges, as noted by the Security Council mission that visited the country in late November. The most visible reminders of the 2006 crisis, particularly the petitioners, internally displaced persons and the fugitive Reinado, have become even more prominent during the reporting period and continue to constitute potential destabilizing elements. Further, persisting differences among political leaders and parties have prevented consensus approaches for resolving these and other pressing issues. As highlighted by the Security Council mission, unless the differences among the Timorese leaders are resolved, political uncertainty will persist, together with the prospect of renewed violence and bloodshed (see S/2007/711, para. 24). Intensified efforts to promote dialogue to defuse existing tensions and foster greater political consensus, as well as the strengthening of inclusive democratic processes, will thus be essential for achieving sustainable stability and prosperity in Timor-Leste.

56. The Security Council mission also highlighted that rebuilding the population's confidence in the State institutions is among the critical challenges facing the country, along with those relating to internally displaced persons, security sector reform, economic development, restoring stability, strengthening democratic institutions and improving governance and the rule of law (see S/2007/711, paras. 22 and 23). As conveyed by my Special Representative to the Council in September 2007, and as I reiterated during my December visit to Timor-Leste, UNMIT, in partnership with the Timorese, has particularly focused its efforts during the post-electoral period on four priority areas: review and reform of the security sector, strengthening of the rule of law, economic and social development and promoting a culture of democratic governance. However, as these are complex undertakings requiring long-term commitment, and as much remains to be done in these and other areas of the broad mandate given to UNMIT, I propose a mandate extension for a further 12 months at the present composition and strength.

57. Given the continuing fragile environment in Timor-Leste and the level of confidence among the Timorese population in their security institutions, one of the most critical institutions warranting sustained assistance is the national police service. Despite considerable progress in the screening and mentoring process, the national police force requires further training, institutional development and strengthened capacities to be in a position to assume full responsibility for dealing with potentially volatile security situations. UNMIT police officers, particularly those in formed police units, have continued to be required to respond to group fighting and public disturbances, and have in large part contributed to the relatively stable security situation and the drop in serious criminal offences, with the support of the international security forces. The daily occurrence of public disturbances, however, further highlights the need for a continued UNMIT police presence to perform interim law enforcement until the national police force is fully reconstituted.

58. Upon completion of the 2007 elections, UNMIT police devoted increasing attention to the reform and rebuilding of the national police, including discussions with the Government on the eventual handover of policing responsibility. The progress in the phased handover of policing responsibility will be one of the key elements in determining what future adjustments will be

needed in the Mission's police strength. In order to conduct a thorough assessment of the requirements of the national police as well as possible adjustments needed to UNMIT police skill sets, I intend to send an expert mission to UNMIT in the first quarter of 2008, as suggested by my Special Representative. To facilitate the handover process through adequate mentoring of the national police, I am encouraging contributing countries to offer officers with the required training expertise.

59. In conjunction with continued assistance to strengthen the national police, there is a vital need, as elaborated above, for sustained support to further build capacities in the justice sector, including for follow-up to the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry. UNMIT has played an important coordination and facilitation role vis-à-vis the Government, UNDP and other key partners to strengthen judicial institutions and address gender and juvenile justice issues. The capacities of the national judicial and corrections institutions, however, are still insufficient to meet the country's needs, with the substantial case backlog as just one example. Continued support from UNMIT, together with that of UNDP and other partners, is necessary to consolidate and build on the gains made thus far to ensure sustainable development of the sector.

60. In highlighting the need for intensified collaborative efforts by the Timorese to tackle the enormous challenges still facing the country, it should also be recognized that success is not measured simply in terms of whether all pressing problems are resolved quickly. Many of the tasks required to be undertaken to implement sustainable solutions will require both short- and longer-term efforts. Success should also be measured by the way in which challenges are addressed, including whether policy- and decision-making by State institutions is made through constructive and broad debate as well as transparent and accountable processes, and development of consensus, or at least compromise, approaches. Although there may be continuing differences of political views within Timor-Leste, the ability to address the country's problems and strengthen the State's foundations will depend on all of Timorese society unifying to rise above partisan considerations in order to promote national interests.

61. With the manifold challenges ahead, this is a critical moment for the United Nations to reaffirm its continued commitment to Timor-Leste. All Timorese interlocutors conveyed to both the Security Council mission and to me their desire for the United Nations to remain in the country to provide the assistance needed at this vital stage. The Mission's integrated "one United Nations system" approach has been valuable in harnessing coordinated support for the efforts of the country's leaders and institutions to meet priority needs. A continuation of the integrated Mission is crucial not only to ensure that the gains of the past year are not jeopardized, but also to support Timorese-owned solutions and self-reliance in addressing the many challenges ahead.

62. In conclusion, I want to thank my Special Representative, Atul Khare, for his leadership and to congratulate all the men and women of UNMIT and the United Nations country team for their dedication and determined efforts to advance the cause of peace and stability in Timor-Leste.

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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Letter dated 14 January 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On 10 December 2007 the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Armenia circulated a letter opposing the draft resolution entitled "Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development". In this regard we would like to draw your attention to the following.

Armenia considers the draft as a step irrelevant to the ongoing peace negotiations. Just on the contrary, the draft resolution proposed by GUAM by calling on the settlement of conflicts and restoration of peace is targeted to support the international mediation efforts.

As for the allegation of Armenia of transferring the conflicts from the OSCE to the United Nations, we would like to underline that the GUAM States are neither offering nor willing to transmit the conflicts, lasting for more than 10 years within their territories, from one organization to another. The goal of the GUAM States is just to mobilize the support of the international community to the settlement of the protracted conflicts.

Irregardless of the fact that whether this is the United Nations or OSCE is involved to the settlement of the conflicts in the territories of the GUAM States, both of them act on and proceed from the legal basis established by the United Nations, including resolutions adopted by the Security Council related to the conflicts.

The matter is not to relocate the settlement of conflicts to the United Nations. The purposes and principles of the United Nations, envisaged by the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations, is enough ground to accept the intention of GUAM as legitimate one and completely relevant to the ongoing talks. The

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Armenian allegation that United Nations will undermine the peace negotiations derives from the exceptional and non-constructive attitude of Armenia to the United Nations.

As far as the Armenian contention not to put all conflicts into the same basket is concerned we would like to state that the ongoing conflicts in the GUAM States, three out of four of which based on territorial separatism, has similarities as they have distinctions. The conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan is direct consequence of the claims of Armenia to that region, which resulted in the occupation of the Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent regions, as well as expulsion of local Azerbaijani population. The main issue is the jointly elaborated principal position of the GUAM States, which establishes the basis of the draft resolution, must be taken into consideration.

All these conflicts are dealt with separately and each has its own format. GUAM States do not intend to confuse or change current formats of the settlement process of these conflicts and processes of their settlement. But this approach to the resolution of the conflicts is based on the same principles, which in their turn derived from the international law.

As for the allegation of Armenia that the draft resolution is contrary to the elements, subject of the ongoing discussions, it must be noted that the issue here is about obtaining support of the international community for the approaches, constituting the basis for the settlement of the conflicts. GUAM States are not intending to intervene to the settlement framework of any protracted conflict.

Furthermore, Armenia asserts that, the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is close and there are only a few issues that remain unsolved. The concern of Armenia (conducting the negotiations on the basis of fait accompli) is not surprising, as there is a possibility of obtaining the support of the international community for the solution of the conflicts on the basis of principles and norms of international law. Blaming everyone except himself and conducting peace talks proceeding from the fact of occupation, and frightened of being covered by the international law, Armenia must confess that the reason of infringement of the peace talks is not the joint position of GUAM States built on international law, but the occupation of territories of sovereign Azerbaijan.

Finally, we would like to draw your attention to the phrase "so-called GUAM area" in the letter. As you are well aware, GUAM is an organization with full international legal subjectivity, including international membership, scope and legal nature. In this case, "GUAM area" in the resolutions refers to the territories of the member States, which Armenia is not willing to accept.

I should be grateful if the present letter were distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 16 and 20, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Agshin **Mehdiyev**
Permanent Representative